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THE GOD OF THINGS

A NOVEL OF MODERN EGYPT

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The God of Things

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The God of Things

A NOVEL
OF MODERN EGYPT

BY

FLORENCE BROOKS WHITEHOUSE

"The God of Souls is beyond me; it is the God of Things that I am talking of, and I believe absolutely that the dictates of his will are beyond our control."

With Illustrations from Drawings by the Author

Boston
Little, Brown, and Company
1902

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To My Mother

31X685

ILLUSTRATIONS

From Drawings by Florence Brooks Whitehouse

"She surveyed the reflected figure listlessly" . *Frontispiece*

"'Quies,' Dorothy said, 'O-o-o-o! Quieskatia'" . . . . . *Page* 39

"Dorothy turned as she started up the steps" . " 45

"'Come here, Mr. Morrison, and meet the Baroness von Hausheim'" . . . . " 140

"A silence fraught with significance settled between them" . . . . . " 284

man was sitting motionless, his hands clasped about his knees, and a cigar between his lips. At his side were sketching paraphernalia and a half-finished water-color of the scene before him. Lying at full length at his feet was a boy of eight or ten, and at a little distance several Arabs squatted in the sand beside their saddled donkeys.

The silence of the ages, tragic, inscrutable, engulfing, rested over the entire scene. The last of the exploring tourists had left the Pyramids and wandered back to the Mena House, and their laughing voices had been sucked up in the all-absorbing stillness. The harsh, penetrating cry of a camel broke discordantly through the twilight, but was so far away that it hardly entered into the reveries of the group about the Sphinx; like a ripple on the surface of the sea it passed, leaving the fathomless ocean of silence undisturbed.

The face of the artist grew sad and lonely as he watched, unthinkingly, the scene before him. He had drunk deep of life's cup of sorrow, and the silence and the twilight were stirring up the dregs again. Finally the boy rose to a sitting posture, and looked across the desert with uneasy eyes.

"They 've been gone an awful long time,

papa," he said anxiously. "Perhaps they went too far and got lost." The man made no reply, and a plaintive note crept into the boy's voice as he asked, "Do you suppose they did, papa?"

"Perhaps," the man answered, with no conscious interruption in his mournful reveries, and the boy went on:

"If they were lost, papa, would we ever find them? The desert is so big and lonely!"

To this the man gave no response, and the boy did not speak again, but sat thoughtfully facing the desert, and trying to penetrate the deepening gloom.

In the distance two camels were moving slowly toward the group in question, but to the eager, longing eyes of the boy they seemed scarcely more than specks on the vast desert which surrounded him.

"One never loses the mystery of it," a girl said softly, stroking the camel on which she sat. "There is a romance of past deeds and ages which makes one awestruck in spite of one's self. It seems to me that the most common of all commonplaces is fraught with meaning in this country," and she turned toward the rider of the other camel a pair of dark, serious eyes.

Those which met hers were kind and thoughtful, and a man answered sympathetically:

"You are quite right, Miss Dike. I have been here six weeks, and the wonder has not in any way abated. And yet," he paused and smiled, "how many of 'Cook's personally conducted' do you suppose feel awestruck? I tell you, to enjoy Egypt to the full, one must have time. The typical sightseer loses all that is most fascinating here. He does not get into the life at all."

"No," the girl replied; "Egypt is jealous of her mysteries, and only divulges them to those who seek for them."

"'Seek' is hardly the word, Miss Dike. It is more being in sympathy with her, for the life here is essentially a lazy one. But its very laziness is intoxicating," he added lightly, "as intoxicating as hashish and perhaps quite as harmful, for already I am beginning to lose my ambition, and my sojourn here can be reckoned by weeks."

"At that rate, what a useless piece of humanity you will be if you stay here all winter!"

"I shall be thoroughly demoralized," the man laughed, "and probably be living in one of the adobe huts with my donkey and cow."

"Sh!" The girl raised a warning finger. "You are jesting in sight of the Pyramids, and the spirit of Cheops may hear and follow you with dire misfortune and woe. How can you?"

The man took off his hat and ran his fingers through his long hair, throwing his bared head up in the night air in very ecstasy of being alive. A spirit of exaltation possessed him; his face was boyish in its happiness.

"'To-morrow do thy worst, for I have lived to-day,
Be fair, be foul or rain or shine,
The joy I have possessed, in spite of Fate, is mine,
Not Heaven itself upon the past has power,
And what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.'"

The voice dropped on the last words, and a sad tone stole into it. The elated expression fled from his face, and habitual lines of melancholy settled upon it, making him look older than he really was.

They went on a little in silence. The great camels lumbered slowly over the desert, swinging their heads to and fro as they lifted their heavy sponge-like feet and dropped them again in the sand with monotonous regularity, and the light of the setting sun made a path of gold upon the desert in front of them to which the dark, majestic Pyramids seemed the only end.

"I don't know why it is," the girl said finally, "but at times I find the very air of Egypt oppressive. I can't shake off the weight of it all. In Italy, it was different. Even the first time, though it was beautiful and strange, I never felt the depression as I do here. Why is it?" And she laughed. "Do you think it is all because it is so old?"

"It is very plain, Miss Dike, that you are taking Egypt too seriously. I am afraid the visit to Bûlak yesterday has left its bad effect. Did the musty mummy clothes of old Rameses exhale into your sensitive spirit some of the grandeur of his past deeds, that you are so serious to-day?" He spoke lightly, and she smiled.

"What a fearful looking thing he was!" she said by way of answer. "Fancy a man as small as he having such power over a people! I always supposed he was six feet, at least, and big in proportion."

"It isn't brute force that rules, though," the man replied. "Think how many of our heroes have been small men."

"Yes, I suppose mind must always govern, only it seems as if with uneducated people its influence must be less strong."

"But they are little more than animals, Miss

Dike, and it is our mind which conquers them. Take it here, for instance. If these camels knew their strength, do you suppose they would be content to be mere beasts of burden? With one little toss of their bodies, they could unseat us and be their own masters; but in us they recognize, not superior force in the way of physical strength, but a power which is really mind and which almost hypnotizes them till they are powerless to act except at our command."

"The last faint spark of their independence sometimes rises up in resentment, though," Miss Dike said, laughing, "when they utter the diabolical howls they do occasionally. After all, they have the advantage over us; for however we may be able to conquer them, they always *look* masters of the situation. Did you ever see such an air of ownership as they have? I always feel apologetic when I pass a camel, he looks at me with such a contemptuous air, as much as to say, 'You are so hopelessly new! Before the Pyramids were built, I was here. From the beginning of things I reckon my ancestry.'"

They were passing the Pyramids, and the Egyptian night shut down heavy and black upon them, leaving them in almost utter dark-

ness. They hastened their gait, and scarcely spoke till they reached the little group about the Sphinx.

Bobbie Dike rose with a cry of joy as the wanderers came into view, and presently he and his father were mounted on their donkeys, and the procession turned toward the Mena House.

"Did you finish your sketch, papa?" Dorothy asked, as they rode slowly in the darkness.

"Not wholly, daughter, but another hour will complete it, and it promises to be a good one," the man answered. "There 's no lack of inspiration here, at any rate."

"Mr. Morrison and I were saying much the same thing this afternoon, — that every little incident seemed full of significance here," the girl replied. "I hope you were n't tired waiting," she added tenderly.

"I was," Bobbie said frankly. "Did you get lost on the desert?" he asked eagerly, thirsting for a good tale of adventure.

Dorothy laughed as the camel knelt at the Mena House, allowing her to dismount.

"No, dear, we were not lost, but only lazy. It was so lovely on the desert, we could not leave it. The next time you shall go too."

And Bobbie trotted off to the hotel, tightly holding her hand, and planning all kinds of adventures for the promised ride.

Driving back to Shepheard's that night, Dorothy sat on the back seat of the hack, while her father and Mr. Morrison faced her. Bobbie lay asleep with his head in her lap, and the carriage rolled softly over the sandy roads. Dorothy sat silent. Her father and Mr. Morrison were deep in Egyptology, and occasionally bits of their conversation would fall on her ears; but they paid little heed to her, and gradually she lost herself in her own thoughts. The voices of the two people opposite her grew more and more animated, yet they did not disturb her dream; instead, they made a part of it. Gradually she became conscious of Mr. Morrison's voice. It was singularly beautiful, being deep and musical and full of modulations. It commanded her attention, and she found herself wondering if it were this which made him so attractive, so unlike any other man she had ever known. Then his face came up to her, the finely-shaped head, with the masses of dark hair which he wore longer than fashion dictated, the dark, dreamy eyes full of impenetrable sadness, marked by straight black brows, the firm mouth and chin

shadowed by the short mustache, and the sunny radiance of his smile.

"No," she thought to herself, with a little tremulous sigh of satisfaction, "it is no one thing, — it is the wonderful whole."

Dorothy closed her eyes, and, leaning back against the carriage, journeyed into a country of dreams, from which she was rudely banished when the hack reached Shepheard's. It was late and few people were about, and Mr. Morrison bade them good-night at the door.

"It has been a lovely day, Mr. Morrison," Dorothy said, by way of parting. "Thank you so much for your share in making it so."

She held her hat in her hand, and her disordered hair fell like a halo about her face. There was a suggestion of warm, rosy childhood about her which appealed strongly to the man before her. A great tenderness swept over him, and he longed to press the ruffled head to his breast. Instead, he heard himself saying, while he took the proffered hand:

"What I have done has been from a most selfish motive, Miss Dike," and then he left them.

When Dorothy reached her room that night, before even removing the light wrap which she wore, she walked with eager purpose to her

trunk, and unlocking it, took from it her folio, which rested on the tray, and drew out a letter. It was a long letter, but she turned over the pages hastily till she came to the paragraph for which she sought. This she read and re-read; it ran as follows:

"In your wanderings in Cairo you may run across my friend, Philip Morrison, who is wintering in Egypt. He has already received express orders from me to make himself known if you do appear upon his horizon. He is a charming man, and you will like him."

She smiled softly to herself, as she prepared for bed, and even hummed a little tune under her breath; but when she had put the gas out, and crawled into her nest, she said quite sharply to herself:

"Don't be a goose, Dorothy. You are too old to wax sentimental over a man who happens to be kind and agreeable to you." And thereupon she fell asleep.

CHAPTER II

THESE many years since we began to be,
What have the Gods done with us? what with me?
What with my love? They have shown me fates and fears,
Harsh springs, and fountains bitterer than the sea,
Grief a fixed star, and joy a vane that veers,
These many years.

SWINBURNE.

ROBERT DIKE stole silently down the stairs after he had bade Dorothy and Bobbie good-night, and, going out on the almost deserted porch, sought a secluded corner where he would be undisturbed in the shadow. The spell of Egypt was upon him. The fingers of retrospect were turning back the pages of the past, and the blotted, tear-stained leaves set the old ache gnawing at his heart.

In the silence of the centuries the memory of his dead wife came to him with tangible directness, and he buried his face in his hands while the years of their united lives passed clearly before him. He saw her a girl again, when he had first wooed and won her. He went over the passionate beauty of their lives together, through the crowning joy of the birth

of their two children, to the time when she was laid to rest, and he had risen from her grave to gather up the broken threads of his life and knot them together into a web of seeming content.

During his last year at Harvard, Robert Dike met Pauline Dumfries several times in Boston society. They fell passionately in love with each other, and directly after his graduation they were married. Their life together was a singularly tranquil one, and their love for each other almost idolatrous. She was a devout Roman Catholic, and perhaps her only grief was that her husband was not entirely in sympathy with her religiously. When Dorothy was born, nearly eight years after their marriage, it was Pauline's earnest request that she should be brought up in the Catholic Church. Her husband consented, his only desire being that she should be as nearly like her mother as possible, and Dorothy grew up a strict Romanist. When Dorothy was twelve, a son was born to them, and three years later Mrs. Dike died. At his wife's dying request, the heart-broken man was confirmed in the Catholic Church, and in giving himself faithfully up to its tenets he found his greatest comfort.

Leaving his children with a married sister, he spent two years abroad, trying vainly to outrun his sorrow; till, in despair, he turned, sick with misery, back to his native land. With a determination he had never shown since his wife's death, he forced himself to return to his house where all the beauty of his life had lived and died, and, entering, stood dazed and blinded in the hall.

From the shadows two little hands were outstretched, and a quivering face was raised to his, and for an instant he stared in bewilderment. Then something caught in his throat. The girl who stood before him was gazing at him with Pauline's eyes, and Pauline's voice was speaking to him. Later, when they had spent many happy days together, he said to Dorothy, quenching the longing in his heart:

"You must go away to school, Dorothy;" but she raised her proud little head and answered him with a decided refusal.

"My place is with you, papa." From that time there had been no separations for them. The love he had thought buried with his wife awoke to the claims of his children, and his life became bound up in them. Then had followed years of study and work for them

all, — years when Robert Dike found renewed interest in his profession, and earned laurels for himself among the men with whom he came in touch. He added to his already large fortune, and when the rainy day found him, and his physicians told him he must take a protracted rest, he laid aside his books with an easy conscience, and took Dorothy and Robert across the water for an indefinite trip.

They spent a year wandering leisurely through the British Isles; then they came across the channel to Spain, and skirted the coast of the Mediterranean till they at last arrived at Cairo. Then Robert Dike revived an infatuation which had vanished with his wife's death, — the old love of painting. In his early days his passion for art almost conquered him and made of him a professional painter, instead of an advocate, and even after the law claimed him, his love for art was very strong, and throughout his married life, from time to time, he had taken up his brush to while away an afternoon reproducing some touch of nature which appealed to him.

Here the wonderful beauties of landscape and sky woke the old longing to copy, and the elderly man with the artist's box and

large umbrella became a familiar object to the tourists in Cairo.

Often Dorothy and Robert accompanied him to explore the various places while he worked, and the natives learned to watch for the beautiful American girl who was always so sunny and happy, and who talked with them so often about the land in which they lived.

Under the cheerful, joyous temperament and smiling eyes, however, lay a depth of seriousness which was overlooked by the superficial observer of Dorothy's personality. She, too, had sounded the wells of suffering, and while her father was trying to bury his sorrow underneath new skies and new scenes, Dorothy faced hers, and learned to fight against the awful loneliness which threatened to crush out all her youth and happiness.

She had loved her mother devotedly, and when she was summoned from boarding school at the end of her second year to find that she was motherless, she shut herself away from sympathetic friends, and refused to be comforted. After the last sad rites were over, and her father had gone abroad, Dorothy went to her father-confessor and poured out her heart.

"I can't go back to school again," she sobbed. "There is something here," putting

her hand upon her heart, "that is dead, I think."

The old priest with the kindly eyes looked sadly into the tear-disfigured face. Dwelling as he did among life's shadows, he had watched others with sorrows akin to hers, and he knew the only panacea was work. So the school was given up, and he gave her some mission work to do, — work which demanded all her sympathies; and Dorothy threw herself into it with morbid intensity, and buried herself, as far as she could, from friendly eyes.

Then the reaction came. She began to retrace the steps of the old life again, but with a different purpose and interest. She saw a new seriousness in everything, and her friends said, "She is so changed! She is so severe!"

But the old priest watched her with fatherly tenderness, for he knew the signs, and realized that the outliving of sorrow is not to be hurried by outside influences; it is a work of phases and time.

Gradually she passed this phase. Life looked bright to her again, but things were different. The child had become a woman, and looked at the world through a woman's eyes.

When Robert Dike came back to his chil-

dren, he found her, at seventeen, a strong, self-reliant young woman who could carry her own burdens and help him with his. Of the two, she was spiritually the stronger, and in one bound she had stepped from his feet to his side. Henceforth she was his companion, and oftentimes his guide. The next five years were devoted to study. She had always been an omnivorous reader, and a quick appreciation and retentive memory made the years profitable ones to her, so at twenty-two she stood on a plane with the average girl who had been educated in the best of schools.

Robert Dike never questioned what Dorothy did, and she soon grew to depend upon herself and her own judgment. The result was, her nature was warped by none of the conventionalities of society; her tastes, as were her father's, were Bohemian in their trend, and she grew to be, to an unusual degree, a law unto herself. She felt very strongly that she would never marry. Her mission was marked out for her, to make her father and Bobbie happy, and thus far her ideas had never changed.

They had been in Cairo some weeks, and there was no thought of moving further. At first, in contemplating the trip, the intention had been to spend a part of the winter in Cairo,

and then to return to Rome, to which Mr. Dike was very much attached; but Egypt contained such a wondrous field for art and interest that, by common consent, the other trip was postponed, and the headquarters taken up in Cairo indefinitely.

Cairo opened all sorts of fascinating vistas to Dorothy's appreciative eyes, and the Egyptian life, in its novelty and variety, had not lessened its hold upon her senses. She never tired of sitting upon the porch at Shepheard's and watching the passers-by, — the curious, living panorama. Turks in native costume, their long, dirty tunics floating in the light breezes, their heads bandaged, their feet bare; women with their yashmaks, above which only the questioning eyes looked out, carrying their babies astride their shoulders; saïs outrunners, flower girls, water-carriers, soldiers, Greeks, Europeans, — there they all passed, on their way to and from the various parts of the city, intent or listless, as the case might be, but always absorbingly, extravagantly interesting.

Though Shepheard's is essentially a hotel for transients, the life there is more full of variety and interest than at any other hotel in Cairo, and the excitement of the constant bustle of arrival and departure appealed to Mr. Dike

and Dorothy, and there had been no thought of changing. She had made many acquaintances among the tourists, some of them agreeable ones, and she felt thoroughly at home as she would nod to one and another of the guests.

They saw a great deal of Philip Morrison. Although he knew many people in Cairo, he seemed to Dorothy singularly alone, and from the first of their meeting he always found time to call in the evening for a quiet chat and a smoke with Mr. Dike before retiring. The two men had much in common, and the older man always welcomed Philip with friendly affection. They drifted easily into friendship with him, for he was very thoughtful and kind to them, and in the days when they had known few people, he made himself invaluable as guide and director of their sight-seeing; yet, notwithstanding his friendliness and attention, Dorothy always felt a repellent atmosphere in their intercourse. Sometimes, before she could answer his smile, a shadow would cross his face and drop like a curtain between them. He never spoke of himself, except in a general way, although Dorothy had talked of herself very freely to him, and even in regard to his life before he came to Cairo, he was very reti-

cent. Once, when the conversation turned upon Miss Dunlap, their mutual friend, he had shown so little interest that it soon died out for lack of encouragement.

One morning Dorothy and Philip were in the garden back of Shepheard's. The soft odor of spring was in the air, and the wealth of tropical foliage was still wet and shining from the morning's irrigations. It was early, and the garden was deserted, save for Bobbie and a boy of his own age who was struggling to beat him in the thrilling sport of shooting darts through a tin tube at a target.

Dorothy held some light embroidery in her hands, and sat near a little rustic table upon which lay her vari-colored silks. Under the shade of a giant palm, Philip lay at full length in a steamer chair, lazily smoking a nargile. He had been reading to Dorothy Swinburne's "Garden of Proserpine," a poem of which he was passionately fond, and the book lay open on his knee.

"It is fascinating," Dorothy said reluctantly, "in its rhythm and euphony; but it is hopelessly agnostic and morbid, and could not possibly help one in any way. One poem like that does more harm than twenty optimistic ones can undo."

Philip did not agree with her.

"I don't think it is necessarily harmful," he said lazily in contradiction, and then he quoted softly:

> "'That no life lives forever,
> That dead men rise up never;
> That even the weariest river
> Winds somewhere safe to sea.'"

It seemed to Dorothy that his voice lingered lovingly over the lines, and the wonderful melody of it made the words impress her painfully. She turned toward Philip with a protest on her lips; but his eyes were closed, and she waited.

Philip roused himself, and slowly puffed at the nargile. "Yes, it *is* morbid, Miss Dike," he said quietly, without looking at her; "but I suppose I have an unusual tenderness for it because its very morbidness has helped me over many bad attacks of the blues."

"Yes," Dorothy answered impatiently, regarding him gravely. "Helped you by companionship,—misery likes company, you know. It has shown you the uselessness of striving, because everything is bound to be as ordained,—nothing matters. It has made you stoical, and given you a feeling of don't care; but it never helped you, truly helped you to overcome your

blues and face the world like a man." Her face was serious and eager, and the excitement had flushed her cheeks.

There was a pause. Dorothy's hands tightened upon the embroidery in her lap, and her troubled eyes fastened upon them. Philip smoked a few moments in silence. Both were busy with their thoughts. Finally he spoke.

" Perhaps the time never came to you when you were grateful for this very thought of Fatalism, when you stood in such a maze of circumstances that only one outcome seemed possible, and it was a relief to fold your hands and make yourself believe that you were not a free agent; but that your life lay as fixed before you as the course of a train of cars over the steel road, and the only thing left which was at all worthy was to bear stoically what must come." His voice was bitter, and the hopelessness in it touched Dorothy. He had never spoken so nearly of himself before, and it frightened her a little. She seemed to herself singularly inexperienced and simple, incapable of saying anything which could help him in any way.

She hesitated a moment, and then she said quietly:

" I don't know from experience what it is to suffer like that, but my own consciousness

tells me that there are two ways of bearing grief or" — she stopped as if to choose her word — "punishment: a noble way when it consecrates, and an ignoble way when it embitters and degrades; and certainly the idea of stoically bearing anything is not ennobling."

"When people suffer," Philip said quietly, between long puffs at his nargile, "they don't often think of how they ought to bear it. They are quite content to be selfish and ignoble, if it eases the pain. There was a time when I thought I did not care —" he paused a moment, smoking silently; then he went on with restrained vehemence, speaking so low the words were scarcely audible — "when I had forced myself to renounce, without grumbling, all hope of happiness and love; but now —" he stopped suddenly, and, rising, walked away across the garden, where Bobbie stood shooting darts. He took the tin tube from Bobbie's hand, and, shooting, hit the bull's eye every time, to the boy's intense satisfaction. When he returned to Dorothy, he began to talk of something else.

CHAPTER III

WE are in love's hand to-day,
  Where shall we go?
. . . . . .
There 's many a wind and way
  And never a May but May;
We are in love's hand to-day,
  Where shall we go?

SWINBURNE.

He knew
That that night had divided his whole life in two,
Behind him a past that was over forever — before him . . .

Lucile.

THE next morning Dorothy received a little note from Philip written on the back of a visiting card. It was a way he had of sending for her when he wished to see her, and she was not in seeing distance.

"I am pining for excitement," it read. "Take pity on me and go for a drive to Heliopolis. I will call for you at two, so we can have a long afternoon."

Dorothy came down the stairs that afternoon looking the embodiment of radiant joyousness. She was dressed all in white, and swung a white parasol lightly in her gloved

hand. She glanced about the hall; but, not seeing Philip, she went to the little drawing-room where he usually awaited her. She found him there talking to a small, well-dressed woman whom he presented as Mrs. Westwood Lee. She took Dorothy's hand in her gloved ones, and held it while she stood talking to her.

"Oh, my dear!" she chirped, as she looked into the soft, clear eyes, "it is only you Americans who can do this sort of thing with impunity, — go driving with fascinating men unchaperoned. You can waive all conventionalities and be excused as Americans; but our poor girls are kept under the strictest surveillance."

Dorothy laughed, and looked at Mrs. Lee frankly. "So it is with some of us," she said; "but I never have been chaperoned in my life, and why should I begin now?"

"Why, indeed?" the lady answered; then she turned to Philip with a pretty gesture of dismissal. "Don't wait here another moment," she said sweetly. "This is much too fine a day to lose."

Afterward, when they were ensconced in the victoria, and whirling swiftly and surely away from Shepheard's, Dorothy asked lightly, and yet with a touch of earnestness in her voice:

"Was she shocked at my going with you, Mr. Morrison, or was she jesting?"

It would not have occurred to Mr. Dike that there could be any impropriety in her driving with Philip, though if he had not liked the man the idea might have presented itself, and Dorothy, so accustomed to judge for herself, had followed her own inclinations.

"Is it shocking?" she asked demurely.

Philip smiled. "Surely we have disregarded the conventionalities continually through our acquaintance, and why should we fret ourselves with them now? It might not do always," he added mischievously, "but I am in every way such an immensely proper young man, you know, and so identified with your party already, that there can be no possible harm."

"After all," thought Dorothy, "if he thinks it is all right, and papa does n't mind, why should I care?" Unconsciously to herself, Philip was gradually taking his place beside her father in making up her world.

The day was Egypt's fairest, and it was impossible to be anything else than joyous. Philip was in the merriest mood imaginable, and even if Dorothy had been so disposed, she would have been unable to withstand his fun and frolic long.

"To-day I mean to enjoy to the full," Philip said, as he leaned back in the carriage and looked at Dorothy. "We will cry, for one day at least, 'Away, dull care!' and take only the joyous things as they pass us. By the way," he said, with easy impertinence, "I have called you 'Miss' quite long enough, and to-day I shall call you 'Dorothy' without even asking permission, and you must call me 'Philip,' and we will fancy we are off on a long journey, regardless of destination, only content to be together."

They laughed and chattered and talked unmitigated nonsense, imagining all sorts of improbable things, and acted like two heedless children free of the oversight of a rigorous nurse. They stopped at the Obelisk at Heliopolis, and passed judgment upon the great monument, while a crowd of dirty, picturesque Arabs thronged about the carriage clamoring for backsheesh. Philip drew from his pocket a handful of silver, and recklessly threw it among them. They watched the scampering and jostling among the Arabs as they hunted for the silver, and then Dorothy turned toward Philip with affected severity, and rebuked him for his extravagance:

"They would have liked coppers just as

well, Mr. Morrison; you are prodigal with your riches." And he smiled and answered:

"This is our Utopia to-day, Dorothy; don't grudge them a share of it. They probably never saw so much silver before, and never will again, and we can afford to let them have it. To-day we will do as we like; let to-morrow take care of itself."

An Arab woman passed them, carrying on her head a flat basket filled with orange blossoms. The fragrance was strong and sweet as they drove by, and Philip ordered the driver to stop. He bought them all, paying a fabulous price for them, and left her commending him to Allah as they drove on. Dorothy fastened some of the fragrant blossoms in her dress, and buried her face in the others.

"There is no odor so penetrating and deep as that of the orange blossoms, is there? And nothing so sweet," and she drew in a long breath of delight.

"A veritable bride's flower, Dorothy, and a fit emblem for our Utopia," Philip replied.

They passed a railroad station, and Philip turned to Dorothy with the seriousness in his voice veiled with assumed levity:

"Dorothy, what would you do if I should

take you to that station and carry you off and away, — far away into a different world than we have seen?" His hand dropped for a moment on hers, which lay in her lap; but he took it away again before she had time to withdraw her own. "Would you go, Dorothy?" He was playing with fire, and already his fingers were getting warm.

Dorothy shook her shoulders, and replied with an embarrassed laugh, while a slight color crept over her face:

"Oh, I suppose I should go." It might be taken either seriously or in jest; Philip chose the latter, and ignored it, giving a sharp command to the driver to stop. They had reached the ostrich farm which lies just beyond Heliopolis.

Philip helped Dorothy to dismount, and they wandered through the different yards, from the coops where the little ones were just out of the shells, on through the different stages till the great birds were reached. They lingered about the gates with much amusement, watching the curious creatures that would eat paper boxes with apparently as much relish as they would juicy, ripe oranges; and when they turned toward Cairo, the afternoon was beginning to wane.

One thing occurred to mar the perfection of the afternoon, to Dorothy at least. As they drove home they passed a group of Arabs who were driving a camel into Cairo. At each step the poor creature would utter a heart-rending cry, and it seemed to be with difficulty that he was made to proceed at all. As they approached, they discovered the cause. One of the camel's fore-legs was broken just at the knee, and at every step the bone protruded through the flesh. The carriage stopped, and they tried to learn the reason of the camel's needless suffering. The Arabs understood little English, and they knew almost no Arabic aside from the necessary words of command and greeting; but, with the interpretation of the driver, they learned that the camel was being driven to Cairo in order to be killed.

"Why not kill him here?" Dorothy asked impatiently, her face full of pity for the poor creature; and the driver interpolated:

"They no get backsheesh for him here, and they sell him lots in Cairo."

Dorothy's face flushed angrily, and she struck the cushion with her clenched fist.

"Tell them they are brutes!" she said furiously. "Brutes, and that Allah will send curses upon them for their cruelty!"

They did not know whether the driver interpreted her words literally; but if he did, they had no effect, for the Arabs goaded the poor beast on, and Philip ordered the man to drive quickly, that they might get away from the sound of his distress, for Dorothy was on the verge of tears.

Neither spoke till the camel was left far in the distance; then Dorothy said, while her voice still trembled with excitement:

"It is cruel, cruel! Does heart have to be educated into people?" and her hands shut tight by her sides.

"There are few of us who are good enough to be masters, Dorothy," Philip said thoughtfully. "Man's uncultured nature is above all cruel. The man who has power and uses it justly, whether over man or beast, has more of the divine than the human in him."

They were driving toward the sunset, and gradually the soft, glowing night air calmed Dorothy's agitation, and brought with it a sweeter train of thoughts. Little was said on either side till they reached Shepheard's; then Dorothy remarked, with almost a sigh:

"It would have been simply ideal, Mr. Morrison, if it had n't been for the useless suffering of that poor camel."

And Philip answered, as if the words hurt him:

"It was unwise of us to expect a perfect day, Dorothy. You see it is impossible to live in Utopia even for one brief afternoon."

That night Philip went for a long walk through the dimly lighted streets before going to the hotel. He was physically weary; but his brain was feverish and restless, for the day had been a rare one to him. When he entered his room, his face was full of determination. He walked at once to his trunk, and taking from the depths of it a small wooden box, he unlocked it and spread the contents upon the desk beside him. There were a few letters, a small gold ring, and a photograph.

He opened the letters. They were love-letters written in English in the German text, in the old way they used when writing to each other, joyously blind to the fact that the letters would be legible to other eyes.

He read them through one by one, slowly and dispassionately. For the first time in nine years, he voluntarily faced the memories of the past. The letters were bright and tender, full of love and happiness, and the old familiar characters stood out almost like human things

before his eyes, they were so inseparably connected with her; but his face did not soften as he read. Finally he took up one which bore a date two years later than the others; he held it a moment before opening it, then he read it through without stopping. It was the last in the German text.

"It is useless, Philip," the letter ran. "We cannot be happy together, and I am going away. My soul is stifling in this atmosphere, and I must be free. You will say I never loved you; perhaps you are right. At any rate, we two read the word differently. I am not brave enough to be miserable with smiling lips, so I am going away. This is not a hasty step; I have thought it all out. Forget me; I shall go out of your life and never trouble you again."

There remained only one after this, and that was dated still two years later, and bore a foreign postmark.

"By a curious circumstance I did not go to America on the 'Elbe' as planned, and so I am still in the land of the living; but it is an easy way for me to drop out of your life, for my name was on the passenger list, and those who remember me at all over there will think I perished on that ill-fated steamer. I write

you this because I feel you ought to know, not because I think you care what becomes of me."

When Philip finished the letter, he lighted a match and set it on fire, holding it till the flame crept to his fingers. This he did with all the other letters, and then he took up the photograph and looked at it earnestly. The face was wonderfully beautiful, and the eyes were looking straight into his — great soulful eyes, full of intensity, questioning, and impatience. Philip held it in his hand studying the face until under his intense gaze it almost woke to life, searching his heart for one thrill of the old emotion; then, apparently satisfied, he crushed it in his fingers and burned it as he had burned the letters. The last faint spark died away, and Philip rose with a sigh of relief; that part of his life was ended.

CHAPTER IV

Across the singing waves the shadows creep.
CELIA THAXTER.

THE next morning Dorothy and Robert came downstairs dressed for a walk, and met Philip in the hall.

"You are just the person I want to see," Dorothy said by way of greeting. "Won't you join us for a trip to the Muskee? Robert and I want to go, and papa is busy, and it is stupid to depend on Abdullah."

Philip expressed himself at her service, and they started out. They crossed the Ezbekîyeh gardens slowly. The morning was so beautiful it seemed a pity to shut themselves up in the narrow labyrinth of sunless streets of the Muskee.

"Tell me some more of Mrs. Westwood Lee, Mr. Morrison," Dorothy said as they lingered through the shady walks.

Philip smiled. "There is so little to tell," he said. "She is always as you saw her yesterday,—the most perfectly self-poised woman I ever met, always gracious and easy, and I

can imagine her in no place where she would not be mistress of the occasion." His voice was full of admiration, but it lacked something.

Dorothy turned quickly. "Nevertheless, you don't like her?" she said, half interrogatively.

"No," Philip answered. "You are right; I do not."

Dorothy lifted her eyebrows in surprise, and walked on in silence.

"She is absolutely without heart," he continued, warming up to his subject, — "what every leader in society must become when that is her one end and aim. She is thoroughly well-bred, charming under every condition, but about as warm as a ray of moonlight on an icicle, and quite as steadfast. She has a way of sitting in the sunshine herself, regardless that another is in the shade, and in some way manages that none of the shadow shall ever touch her. When it approaches too near, she shakes her dainty skirts and retreats gracefully — always gracefully."

Dorothy wondered at his earnestness. "Have you known her long? Was she always like this?" she asked.

Philip's vehemence had passed, and his voice dropped sadly:

"I knew her very well years ago," he said; "but after her marriage I lost track of her, and I found her much changed when I met her again. I saw quite a little of her last summer in Salzburg, and — I don't know — it made me rather blue to see how she had changed. As a girl, she was genuine and unselfish — honest and sincere to a fault."

"What changed her?" Dorothy demanded with interest.

"Life," Philip said with a touch of pessimism, — "what you call Life, and what I call Fate. She married Westwood Lee, who was consul somewhere on the Continent, became a great lady, refined and cultivated till the original character is not discernible. She is thoroughly spoiled — for me," he added apologetically. "Half the people in Cairo wait upon her lightest word with adoration, and probably not one of all the people she knows but would say she is an absolutely ideal woman. She is immensely clever," he ended contemptuously.

They had come to the entrance of the Muskee, and Bobbie ran back to hurry them on. He was impatient to reach the interior, although it was not a new experience to him. As they entered the narrow, dirty streets, it seemed to

them that they left all the air and sunshine behind them, and, but for Bobbie, they would have turned back; but he was anxious to reach the slipper bazaar, and thither they went. As they passed the different booths, the Arabs would lean far out with this thing and that to sell, and some of them would even leave their shops and follow them with cries of entreaty in broken English. Bobbie bought his slippers, and they wandered on. As they passed the "saïs" booths, Dorothy paused and examined the jackets which are dear to every woman's heart. She had no intention of buying them, but the pretty things pleased her fancy. She sat on the edge of the booth and took up the coffee the man offered her. It was bitter, and not at all pleasant, but Dorothy drank it bravely, chattering between the swallows to the merchant, to the amusement of the other Arabs who had congregated about the booths.

"Quies," Dorothy said, "O-o-o-o! Quies-katia."

"Ya-as," drawled the merchant, with a nudge and smile at the Arab who stood next him. "Quies-katia — verra pretty."

He was as anxious to air his English as Dorothy her Arabic.

He held up a curious magenta jacket which

was covered with both gold-and-silver embroidery, but Dorothy made a *moue* of disgust.

"Anna-mush-hourse. Mush-quies," she said, shaking her head and motioning for him to take it away.

This amused the Arabs, and they burst into a howl of delight as they looked at the disquieted shopkeeper. He turned angrily and motioned them away; but they did not stir.

"You no like it?" he said, in an offended tone, as he put it behind him. "N-o-o?" Then in a tone of remonstrance: "Ya-as, that verra pretty," and he started to draw it out again.

Dorothy hastily picked up one which lay near her hand. It was embroidery of gold on a pale blue ground.

"This is prettier," she said tactfully,— "quies-katia."

This seemed to pacify the merchant, and he pulled pile after pile down for her inspection. Philip watched the little scene with his eyes full of amusement, though he did not attempt to take any part in it.

When the Arabs thought that Dorothy was in earnest in regard to buying the jackets, those who had them to sell rushed to their shops, and in the shortest possible time returned with

their arms laden with their wares. Then the scene began to grow animated, and the hitherto comparatively peaceful Arabs grew angry and aggressive.

One of the shopkeepers approached Dorothy and thrust a jacket into her hand. Thinking to pacify the Arab, she took it and looked at it earnestly. Instantly the Arabs thronged around her, and she was the centre of a jostling, quarrelling crowd of angry men. A little frightened look came over her face, but she motioned Philip back as he attempted to reach her side.

She handed the jacket back to the man and said, smiling at him sweetly and authoritatively:

"It is very pretty. Now I must go on."

The Arab refused to take the jacket, and said roughly:

"Backsheesh! Tellata pound!" and barred the way so she could not pass.

"I shall not pay you," Dorothy said angrily; "I don't want it. If you don't take it, I shall drop it on the ground," and she held it as far away from her as she could for the crowd.

The other Arabs withdrew a bit, and enjoyed the discomfort of their companion, making goading jests and insinuations in Arabic,

little of which Dorothy understood, though she could read the taunting faces and knew they were infuriating the Arab.

"Will you take it?" she asked again.

"I want my backsheesh," the man replied stubbornly, and Dorothy let the jacket fall into the dirt.

There was an angry cry, and Dorothy felt rough hands upon her. She looked over the sea of faces to Philip, and then she could never tell what happened. For a moment it seemed as if every one was fighting, and then she felt Philip's arm about her, and saw the shopkeeper prostrate in the dust beside his jacket. Philip's breath came harshly between his open lips, and his arm tightened about Dorothy, while for an instant he defied the brutal faces.

"Go back to your shops!" he said furiously. "Imshi! Imshi!!" and he raised his free hand threateningly.

They had seen the blow which felled their companion, and did not care to have a repetition of it, so they slowly dispersed, watching Philip and Dorothy furtively from a little distance.

Philip turned to Dorothy, and she felt the warmth of a new light in his eyes.

"We must go, Dorothy," he said breathlessly, "for I shall kill that fellow if I stay any longer."

The Arab had risen from the ground, and was brushing the dirt from his clothes and muttering curses on Philip.

"Some day will be my turn," he said, with his face dark with fury, and he slunk back into his booth with the ruined jacket in his hands.

Dorothy felt a warm little hand steal into hers, and Bobbie said enthusiastically:

"That was a corker, Dorothy! Did you see Mr. Morrison give him that knock-out on the jaw with his right, when he touched you?"

The seriousness had been lost on Bobbie; in fact, the fight was so soon over that it hardly seemed a fight at all to him. For an instant Dorothy had forgotten him, and she clasped his hand tightly in hers in atonement.

"The only regret I have is that I did not kill him," Philip said savagely, his face still white with excitement.

Dorothy's eyes sought his.

"It might have been the best thing if you had, Mr. Morrison;" and then she lowered her voice, that Bobbie might not hear. "Did you see his face when he left us? I shall

never feel that you are safe a moment now. He will certainly plan to be revenged."

Philip smiled reassuringly; his self-possession was returning.

"They never plan things, Dorothy. He would have killed me then if he could, but they don't often harbor resentment; they are like children, and forget."

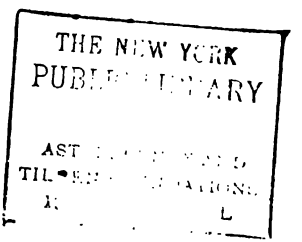
"I hope you are right," Dorothy replied; but the memory of the distorted, hateful face gave the lie to his words.

That afternoon as Dorothy came across the porch, dressed for a tea at the New Hotel, Philip approached her.

"Aren't you going to the Wiltons' tea?" she asked under her white parasol.

"I'm not bidden," Philip replied; "but I will walk over with you if I may."

They walked slowly down the streets, under the shade of the arching eucalyptus-trees toward the New Hotel. The incident of the morning was still vivid in Dorothy's mind, and she scanned the Arab faces she met with fearful eyes, dreading and yet almost expecting to see the dark, malicious features of the Arab of the Muskee; but these were all friendly, and Philip was walking beside her, and his eyes were clear and unafraid.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"There is nothing to fear," she said to herself, and turned and faced Philip.

"You have n't said a word about my gown," she said childishly. "Don't you like it?"

It was a soft blue-wool dress, with a great deal of white about the neck and shoulders, and Dorothy made a bewitching picture as she stood watching him, her girlish face shaded by a large black hat.

"You are such a curious child," Philip answered, looking at her quizzically through half-closed lids, "one never knows how to take you. Yesterday, if I had mentioned your gown, you would have resented it —"

"But this is to-day," Dorothy interrupted coquettishly.

They had reached the New Hotel, and Dorothy turned as she started up the steps. Their faces were on a level; Philip's eyes were looking deep into hers, and she felt the color surge over her face.

"Then to-day I may say what I like?" he questioned with strange eagerness.

"On the whole," she said hastily, "I think we won't talk about it," and she ran quickly up the stairs.

"Dorothy!" Philip called softly, "Dorothy, wait a moment," and she stopped.

"Come to the Ezbekîyeh gardens after the tea. Give me a few moments before dinner. Will you come?" His voice was tender as a caress, and it sent the blood tingling through her veins. "Dorothy, will you?"

It was delicious to have him speak to her like that. She stood still in ecstasy.

"Please do," the voice pleaded, and the sun and breeze and waving trees all seemed to echo the words.

"I will come," Dorothy said, and a moment after she was being greeted by Mrs. Wilton and her daughter.

Above the tinkle of the teacups, even above the chatter of the conversation, Dorothy heard the words, "Will you come? Please do," in soft, beseeching tones, like far-away music.

Late that night Philip went back to the Ezbekîyeh gardens, and threw himself upon the bench where he had sat in the waning afternoon when he waited for Dorothy to come from the Wiltons' tea. The night was perfectly still and peaceful, and Philip leaned back on the settee and closed his eyes. Hardly a sound reached him from the sleepy world outside the gardens — and yet he sat there far into the night, and heard again, as clearly as he had when she came

shyly toward him through the witching twilight, the soft frou-frou of silk skirts and rippling of girlish laughter, and anon he would catch a glimpse of a fair girlish face shaded by a broad-brimmed hat, and a pair of soft brown eyes looking into his.

CHAPTER V

. . . . And thou
Beside me singing in the wilderness —
Oh, wilderness were paradise enow !
OMAR KHAYYÁM.

"THERE is one thing about it, Morrison," Mr. Dike said to Philip, "if we can't go up the Nile, we can at least see the things which are near Cairo. How about taking a trip to Memphis? I want to visit the Serapeum, and perhaps get a sketch of it, if it offers possibilities. What do you say?"

"I 'm at your service, sir," Philip replied. They were just finishing *déjeuner*, and Mr. Dike looked at his watch. "It is now eleven-thirty. Do you think we could do it this afternoon?"

"We could take the train to Bedrashên, and ride on donkeys from there," Philip replied. "I think the trains go on the even hour."

"Just time then," Mr. Dike said. "Well, Dorothy, you and Bobbie can take a drive while we are gone, and we will be home to dinner."

"Miss Dike won't go with us?" Philip asked, and already the excursion began to lose its attractiveness.

"Indeed I shall," Dorothy replied. "Bobbie is going to the polo game with the Merediths, and I can't be left alone. Why not?" she asked her father. "I want to see the famous things as well as you do," and she laid her fingers upon the back of her father's hand caressingly, and looked for acquiescence into his eyes. Mr. Dike never refused her anything, and asking permission was only a matter of form; so they separated, to meet again as soon as they were properly dressed.

The rickety train puffed and steamed into the little village of Bedrashên, sounding like a winded race-horse making his last expiring gasp to pass the goal, and found the whole community congregated about the track, waiting to receive any passengers that might arrive. A crowd of donkey boys surrounded them with their "homars," eagerly pointing out the virtues of their own beasts and the faults of their neighbors' with zeal worthy of a better cause, and they were soon mounted on three of the most promising ones and riding toward the famous ruins of Memphis and Sakkârah.

Mr. Dike was desirous of reaching the Sera-

peum, and so little time was spent on the way. As they paused at the "step" pyramid, a flurry of sand blew in their faces and a shadow seemed to pass over the sun, making a chill in the air. Dorothy and Philip wanted to climb the pyramid, so Mr. Dike rode at once to the Serapeum, saying he wished to get his sketch and must not lose the afternoon, and promising to await them there.

The two donkey boys climbed the pyramid with the agility of mountain goats, and by tying their cufiehs about Dorothy's waist, helped her scramble up the huge steps, picking and choosing the easiest places for her with the facility of long experience. Philip would lend a hand occasionally, when from a vantage point he could be of any help; but for the most part, the donkey boys were efficient. The climb was a hard one, and Philip was in favor of giving it up many times; but Dorothy insisted upon going on, and she gave a little breathless sigh of satisfaction when they reached the top and stood looking at the surrounding country. The Nile lay like a thread of silver in the afternoon sun, with the little villages dotted here and there along its shores, and people looking no bigger than flies swarming about them. Across the fertile stretch of land

they could see the beginning of the trackless desert, the desert over a part of which they had ridden on their camels in the days of their first knowledge of one another, and here and there within the radius of their eyes rose elevations of sand and stone which marked the place of some famous ruin of tomb or temple.

Suddenly Dorothy touched Philip's arm. "What a curious sight!" she said, pointing toward the desert. "Look! That high line of yellow cloud close to the horizon! It looks almost like fog," she added. "What do you suppose it is?"

Philip pleaded ignorance and roused one of the boys who was busy carving Dorothy's initials on one of the stones at the top of the pyramid.

"What makes that queer cloud over there?" he asked, turning the boy toward the west and pointing.

The two Arabs spoke a few words in Arabic to each other, and then one turned to Philip. "It is Khamsin," he said nervously. "We better go over there," and he pointed toward the Serapeum.

Neither Philip nor Dorothy knew anything of the sand storm from experience, and they were not at all anxious as they slipped and

slid and jumped down the enormous steps on their descent from the pyramid. When they reached the ground, the sand was blowing thick and fast about them, and they were almost blinded by it.

"Take us at once to the Serapeum," Philip ordered, when they were on their donkeys, and they started off.

The fury of the storm broke upon them, and the sand lashed against their faces like the prick of fine needles. It was useless to try to keep their eyes open, and Dorothy tied the cufieh which trimmed her hat under her chin, and bent her face close to the donkey's neck. The sand beat upon her ears, making a hissing sound like the rustling of dried corn-husks in the autumn wind, and the donkeys could hardly make any headway against the gale. Philip's hand was upon her donkey's bridle, — he had dismounted long before, — and he walked by her side. The two Arab boys huddled close to each other by the other donkey.

Philip stood still, and tried to look about him. A thick sheet of sand hid everything from sight. Even the donkey boys by his side looked dim and far away. He turned suddenly toward them.

"Do you know where the Serapeum is?"

he asked. One boy pointed weakly in front of him, and the other shook his head. "Do you know where we are?" he asked again. The boys hesitated.

"Perhaps we not know," one muttered. "He sand he so thick. By-and-by we tell you;" then, with an effort at hopefulness, "this way, I think," and they plodded on.

"How long do these last?" Philip asked, after blindly groping in the drifts.

"Sometimes one hour—sometimes all days," the boy replied. "Can't tell."

Philip lifted his bent head, and tried again to penetrate the mist of sand, and then he spoke to Dorothy.

"It is impossible to see anything in this storm," he said quietly; "and we may go into the desert if we ride on, so I think you would better dismount and sit down here until the fury of it is spent a little."

Without a word, Dorothy jumped from her donkey and sat down on the ground. She tried to look up at Philip, but the sand filled her eyes.

"Is there no possibility of turning your back to it?" she asked him. "It seems to come from all directions."

"It does," he replied. "It is like a whirlwind, and penetrates everything." He took

off the short coat he wore, and put it over her shoulders.

"I am not cold," she said, slipping from under it. "You must not sit down without it. You will surely get chilled," and she pushed it toward him. For a moment it lay on the ground between them, and then he picked it up and put it on. They sat near each other, their faces bent upon their folded arms for the most part, to protect their eyes, and the sands drifted about them, creeping up to their knees.

They could not talk much, for the sand filled their lungs and throats, and caused incessant coughing, so they waited with bent heads, beaten by the cool sand-laden wind which swept moaning across the wilderness like the wail of a tormented soul. Once Dorothy put out her hand and felt the sand heaped about her knees and waist. Her feet were entirely buried in it, and she tried to lift them, and failed.

"I think we 'd better move," she said. "The sand is drifted so high I can't lift my feet," and she laughed nervously.

Philip dug about her with his hands, and then helped her to stand. "We can sit down again, Dorothy; but we won't let it get so deep again."

"It is almost like quicksand," Dorothy replied; "it is so easy to sink in and so hard to rise out of it. I hope papa won't venture out in it," she added anxiously. "Of course he would n't, for he said he would wait for us. How late is it?" she asked.

Philip looked at his watch, and after much difficulty found it was a little past three. Dorothy lifted her head and looked through the folds of her cufieh. "It is just as merciless as ever," she sighed. "Is it hopeless to try to go on, Mr. Morrison?"

"I don't think it would be wise to attempt it, Dorothy," Philip answered, "for we might wander away from Memphis on to the desert. I think it is best to stay here."

"Yes," Dorothy said in a muffled voice; "we 'd better stay."

Philip moved nearer her. "Lean against me, Dorothy," he said softly. "It is hard to sit without any support," and Dorothy leaned against his shoulder, while he braced his hand in the sand.

She sat motionless for so long that Philip thought she had fallen asleep, and dared not stir for fear of waking her. He raised his head and the sand smote him with fiery fingers in the face. The lashes hurt; but he shut his

teeth and shaded his eyes with his free hand. Nothing in sight but the group half buried in the sand, and the dense golden curtain shutting them away from the rest of the world. He looked at the shrouded figure on his arm, and dropped his head till his lips touched the cufieh upon her hat. For a unit of time she belonged to him. The restrictions of the past or the future could not affect him. She was his and his alone. Mine, mine, mine, his heart kept beating with desperate joy, and he held his breath to keep the moments back, realizing with cruel clearness that beyond them only a memory would be left to satisfy a lifetime.

Time went by, and the storm still raged. Now darkness was added to the terror of the gale, and Philip could not even see the little figure beside him. He let her slip from his shoulder into the sand, and pulling off his coat, put it under her head. Then he lay flat on his face, and with one foot touching Dorothy's skirt, groped as far as his hands could reach for the boys. He dared not creep a bit away from her, lest in the fierceness of the storm he should lose her entirely; but he could not reach the Arabs, and he did not know but they had been buried under the drifts. Then he

began to fear for Mr. Dike, for he knew that he would be greatly alarmed when they did not appear as night came on; but there was nothing to do. They must wait till the storm was over. He crept back to Dorothy. He dared not let her sleep any more, for fear she would suffocate in the sand. He bent over her tenderly and put out his hand, lifting the cufieh from her face to wake her. She opened her eyes, and, through the blinding darkness, felt rather than saw, the dim outlines of a face above her, and gave a frightened cry.

"What is it, sweetheart?" The words fell unconsciously from his lips, as he slipped a trembling arm under her head, and dropped his face upon her hair.

"Oh, Philip, is it you?" she said tremulously, resting for a bewildering half-second in his arms; then she roused herself suddenly, and sat up, brushing her cheek across his lips, making him sink back into the darkness with a quick-drawn breath.

She put out her hand. "Where are you, Philip?" she half sobbed. "We must not lose each other!"

Philip caught her hand, and held it in his strong, hot clasp, and Dorothy felt the waning courage revive in her veins. They sat silent a

moment; then Philip made an intense effort to still the palpitating of his heart.

"Dorothy, we must shake ourselves again, or the sand will get too deep," and he rose and half lifted her to her feet. A furious gust of wind and sand whirled around them, and the breath of the sand was like a whiff of red pepper, and nearly strangled them. Dorothy staggered and swayed forward, while her outstretched hand fell upon Philip, and he caught her, drawing her passionately to his breast. He was trembling all over, and the violent throbbing of his heart made his breath come in thick, short gasps. It was beyond human will to bear more.

"Kiss me, Dorothy; kiss me, kiss me," he whispered hoarsely, bending over her till she felt his warm lips on her face.

"Philip!"

She pushed back, startled and trembling, from his embrace, shrinking into the gloom which for a moment seemed the lesser enemy. Then she strove through the conflicting emotions to find her voice.

"We must walk," she said pantingly, while her bosom rose and fell convulsively, and her cheeks burned. "We won't be — much worse off — if we wander — on the desert — and we

may come — upon some sort of shelter." Her words fell detached between quick, fluttering breaths.

A shadow of Philip's voice answered: "Yes, we'd better walk. Can you? Are you strong enough?"

"Yes," Dorothy answered, and took three stumbling steps into the darkness.

"Dorothy, take my hand," Philip cried, his alarm for her safety surmounting every other feeling.

Dorothy hesitated. For the first time since she had known him, she was afraid of him, and Philip read this in her wavering, and it hurt him as nothing else could have done.

"I can give you no excuse for my conduct," Philip said unsteadily. "It is too much to hope that you will ever forgive me — but I ask you to trust me till we reach your father, and then give me the punishment I deserve."

Dorothy stood a moment in hostile resistance, while pride, anger, disappointment, and tottering faith waged their battle in her outraged heart; then she stepped across the space which separated them, and held her hand out.

Philip took it contritely in his, distrusting the sudden hope that it might presage her ultimate pardon, and together they breasted the

tempest, fighting through the clouds of sand, wading, burrowing through the drifts, till Dorothy, breathless and exhausted, fell upon her knees.

Philip thought she stumbled, and leaned down to help her up; but Dorothy clung to him helplessly.

"I 'm afraid I can't go on," she whispered, all her pride and anger vanishing under the distressing weakness, and Philip's arms caught her as she sank in the soft sand.

He knelt under the weight of her lifeless figure, and his knees struck rock, and in a moment his groping hands found a wall in front of him.

He took Dorothy in his arms, and, pressing his shoulders against the wall, slipped along till he came to the entrance; a moment more, and he was inside, and his feet struck solid ground. He put Dorothy tenderly on the floor and lighted a match. He found they were in one of the smaller mastabas or tombs, and safe for a while from the storm at least.

He sat beside Dorothy's prostrate figure. He had left his coat in the sand, and had nothing to throw over her. She was weak and apparently unconscious, and he did not try to rouse her.

Leaning against the wall, he sat in suffering silence, one hand touched Dorothy's dress, and the other covered his aching, burning eyes. He dreaded Dorothy's interpretation of his actions when she reviewed them in the light of the morrow's sun, for he felt sure she would be violently angry, and feel that he had taken advantage of her helplessness to play a dishonorable part. He had lost control of himself, and perhaps forfeited her friendship forever. She could not know that beneath the passionate clasp of his arms and the fervent pleading of his lips had lain a great love for her, worshipful and holy, which he must bear silently — silently to the grave. He threw himself down beside her, breaking into a shuddering, convulsive sob. His hands tightened upon her dress, and he pressed his quivering lips to it.

"Sweetheart, sweetheart!" he whispered, shaking from head to foot with the weight of his misery. "If you only knew — if you only knew!"

He lay there in the darkness half paralyzed, making his supreme sacrifice upon the Altar of Fate, and when at last he lifted his heavy, passion-spent face, the storm was over and the moonlight flooded the desert. Across the masses of broken rock and piles of sand he saw

a dim light burning, and, taking Dorothy again in his arms, he hastened toward it. It came from one of the little adobe huts, and several people were standing around the doorway. They all ceased speaking when Philip appeared, and one man came toward him with white face and anxious eyes.

"She is all right," Philip said assuringly, as Mr. Dike staggered forward, looking fearfully at the white face on his shoulder. "She has only fainted. The storm was too much for her," and he told one of the men to bring some water.

In a moment Dorothy woke to consciousness, and saw her father. Then, for the first time, she began to cry, and Mr. Dike, with a voice which trembled, assured her there was nothing to cry about.

Philip brought her some water, which she drank feverishly, and then he bargained for a boat to take them back to Cairo. Rowing down-stream in the little felucca, the three sat in the stern of the boat. Dorothy's face lay white and caressing against her father's shoulder, and Philip watched them with hungry eyes.

The boatmen broke into a weird, pathetic song, "Ya Helisa! Ya Mohammed!" Their bodies swayed backward and forward as the

oars flashed, white and sparkling, in the moonlight, and dropped rhythmically into the water, and the three passengers sat silent, two of them with their eyes fastened upon the nearing lights which marked the fast-approaching city of Cairo, and the third with a steady, hopeless gaze at her who no longer needed him.

CHAPTER VI

FATE holds the strings, and men like children move
But as they 're led.

LORD LANDSDOWNE.

FOR several days Dorothy did not see Philip except in the distance, or in a crowd, and his attitude was so humble and contrite that it gave her an irresistible desire to laugh. Outwardly, however, she kept up the semblance of resentment, and gave him no encouragement that she would forgive him. Yet, as a matter of fact, after the first hot anger had passed, she viewed the matter calmly, and decided that Philip had simply done what any other man might have done if he had found himself in the disconcerting position of having a girl thrust herself into his arms without solicitation or warning. He should have known her better than to fancy she was the kind of girl to permit any caress which did not come from the man she was to marry, and she was disposed to make him suffer for his lack of discrimination; but his utter abjectness was rather more than she expected or could understand.

It is probable that if Philip had gone out of her life then, she would have held him in her memory as one of the possible men she might have learned to care for if everything had been favorable, and doubtless her thoughts of him would have been tinged with a tender regret that she had not known him better, but her loss would have been in no sense irreparable; but Philip chose to stay, and thus the slender bonds which united them were strengthened till the severing of them would mean the demolition of all that was most dear to them both.

It seemed to Dorothy that he kept within the boundary of her horizon all the time,— a solitary figure, silent and gloomy, appearing to take it for granted that his offence was beyond forgiveness, and it was plain that if they were ever to be friends again the advances must come from her. She bore his aloofness as long as she could, and then she wrote to him:

I think you are sufficiently punished for your very bad behavior, and if you will promise to be very good hereafter, I will forgive you.

DOROTHY.

That night she was ostensibly reading in the library at Shepheard's, but in reality

dreaming of Philip, and wondering how he would answer her note, when she heard him behind her, talking softly to her father, who was the only other occupant of the room. She did not turn her head, but apparently discovered absorbing interest in the paper before her; but she was conscious at the same time of a hand upon the back of her chair which sent her heart pumping in a most uncalled-for manner and the blood mantling over her temples and cheeks. She sat scolding herself for her stupidity, and wondering what she should do, when Bobbie burst into the room and relieved the situation. She rose at once, and for an instant looked shyly into Philip's eyes. What she saw there bewildered her. They were full of tears, and she impulsively held out her hand, while a feeling of self-reproach at her cruelty in making him suffer like that, submerged itself into wonder that he should have taken her treatment so to heart.

But to Philip, she seemed an angel as she stood with the light shining down upon her hair, and the friendliness he had missed so long glowing in her eyes, and he wanted to get down on his knees before her and kiss the fingers he held in his own, while the only

words which came to him, resurrected somewhere from his inner consciousness where they had been buried so long that their original significance was lost, were, "There appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and upon her head a crown of stars," and he stood mute before her.

Thus was the breach healed which threatened to destroy their friendship, and Philip set a guard upon himself lest, through still greater folly, he should trespass again upon Dorothy's goodness, and place himself forever beyond her pardon.

"I told you the other morning that you were a Fatalist," Dorothy said; "and now I am afraid I must add, a Pessimist as well — a pessimistic Fatalist! Could anything be worse?" and Dorothy raised her hands in affected horror.

They were out for the afternoon, bent, ostensibly, upon exploring some of the beauties of Cairo, but in reality leaving their destination to the will of an indolent driver, who had turned his horses' heads toward the Shubra Palace. Philip directed his glance toward it for a space before he replied:

"When we come right down to fact, Dorothy,

I fancy most of us have some of the fatalistic feeling at heart. We are not all gloomy Fatalists; some of us are quite cheerful — my fair companion to the contrary notwithstanding," and a smile lighted for a moment the gravity of his face. "But there must come a time in every one's life when he loses faith, if he ever had it, in his power to mould his destiny, and feels himself at the mercy of a blind, resistless, overpowering force which he calls Fate."

"What a horrible thought!" Dorothy said nervously. "You make me feel like a little kitten held over a tub of hot water, — it is useless to squirm, you are bound to drop. Ugh!" and Dorothy made a grimace. But her companion did not answer her jesting — his mood was too serious; these thoughts were vital ones to him.

"Two men work side by side," Philip said slowly; "one spends his whole life striving for something the other man gets without asking. One lives a charmed life; everything painful slips by him on to the shoulders of his less fortunate friend, not because one man is more worthy than the other, but apparently because it is part of the great plan of the universe that one should suffer and the other not."

The seriousness in Philip's voice touched

Dorothy, and she responded to it at once. Her eyes were very earnest and direct as she turned toward him.

"And yet," she said, "this one idea of fatalism precludes the thought of individual effort. We might as well fold our hands and silently await developments, as to strive to do when our striving will accomplish nothing." The sweet face was clouded and a bit sad.

"Life would be dreary indeed if there were no striving," Philip answered. "It is hopeless to drift, and as long as there is life there is hope, you know. We try to believe in our own power to adjust our lives, because this belief brings us greater satisfaction; but a time of question comes to every intelligent soul, and he asks himself what good the ceaseless effort does. Or the blind, unthinking ones go on playing at Fate, as children play with their toy boats in the quiet waters of the harbor, heedless of the controlling power of the wind and waves, and congratulating themselves on their cleverness, till the hand of Destiny comes upon them with invincible power, and shows them that it was her hand, after all, that was at the helm."

"Yet, Philip, what you call Destiny is really the inevitable consequence of an act of our own

will. A certain order of results must follow any act of ours, whether conscious or unconscious. I commit a sin, and I must suffer for it, and because of that sin the whole current of my life is changed; but I am not fated to commit that sin."

"And why not?" Philip questioned seriously. "If voluntary acts bring with them such a train of circumstances, is the wake of involuntary ones less sure because less conspicuous? Our life before has been working up to that very sin, and what seems at first a direct act of ours is really only one of the inevitable consequences of many other involuntary ones."

"Oh, Philip! What a hideous belief! It is like the old Calvinistic creed,—men are damned or saved from the beginning of life, and no amount of effort will change the result."

"My belief stops at the question of souls, Dorothy. We may or may not be able to save our souls by the way in which we bear the things which come to us; I don't pretend to know about that. The God of Souls is beyond me; it is the God of Things that I am talking of, and I believe absolutely that the dictates of His will are beyond our control. We are allowed just enough freedom of choice to make us feel that we are acting of our own volition;

but we are like mice in the clutches of a cat,— at the first attempt to break for freedom, the paw of Fate comes down upon us hard."

Dorothy shuddered and sat silent. They were entering the Shubra gardens, and the usual number of Arabs followed the carriage, proffering their flowers and sweet lemons, for which they, in turn, demanded "backsheesh." They drove slowly and in silence, for once unmindful of the beauty of the gardens, luxurious with the masses of tropical foliage and redolent with the odor of the orange-trees and mimosa blossoms. When they reached the Palace, they left the carriage, and, still followed by the insistent Arabs, wandered through the halls till they reached the centre court where the pond lay.

The coolness was refreshing after the drive in the heat, and they soon found a shady corner where the summer sun could not touch them, and Dorothy sat close to the water's edge and fanned her flushed face with her hat. Across the court the Arabs sat huddled together in unconscious picturesqueness, indolently watching them under the shadow of their white turbans, and talking softly to one another in a musical undertone which floated across the pond like the final vibrations of a weird bit of melody.

CHAPTER VII

THINGS are where things are, and, as Fate has willed,
So shall they be fulfilled.

ROBERT BROWNING.

PHILIP stood looking at Dorothy. "I have a friend," he said abruptly, "whose life from his earliest memory has been an example of this question of foreordination. No other explanation can account for the misery he has borne."

Dorothy looked up gravely into his face. Philip drew a tumble-down settee to the edge of the pond and sat down.

"Shall I tell you his story, Dorothy?" he asked, "and you will see how in his case it is easier, at any rate, to believe in Fate and stoically bear."

He threw one arm across the back of the settee, and sat watching Dorothy's face as he talked to her.

"Way back in this man's memory lies an incident which is the first link in an endless chain of suffering which Fate has been welding for him ever since. No impressions are quite

so intense as those which come in childhood, and" — he hesitated a moment — "this man will never be able to forget until Death closes his eyes and dulls his heart to all feeling, that first terrible realization of a supreme, resistless force which came to him when he was less than six years old. He and his little brother, only a few months younger than he, were left to the care of a father whose every instinct of tenderness had been crushed out by the loss of the wife he had loved, and who held only a feeling of toleration for the boys who bore his name. The two little brothers were inseparable; they played together, slept together, thought together, and grew as one soul. One Christmas Eve the two little boys hung up their stockings by the fireplace in the huge library under the direction of the old nurse, who had been moved by unwonted tenderness to tell them the story of Santa Claus. In the gray morning they woke and whispered for a while of the wonderful story they had heard the night before, and of the possible discoveries they would make when they examined their stockings, and the older boy volunteered to go down and bring them up. He started out in the dim light which turned to almost utter darkness in the large hall and library shut in by the heavy

hangings at the windows, feeling his way downstairs, a strange fear in his little heart of the goblins and harpies who abide in the world of every imaginative child, yet ashamed to face his little brother and confess to the heart of a coward, he crept silently, hesitatingly, along till he came to the fireplace. There he stood a moment in his little bare feet and long nightgown, his tiny hands clasped about the treasured stocking, before he tried to get it down. Then he pulled up a chair, and, standing on it, tried to unfasten the stocking from the mantel. In some way the chair tipped, and in the effort to save himself, he caught at the first thing within his grasp, which happened to be a tall Cloisonné vase of priceless value which stood on the shelf. With a crash which reverberated through the house, it fell to the floor, shattered into bits. Although the boy had fallen at the same time, and was considerably bruised, he was so terrified that he made no sound, but scrambling to his feet, stood with his heart beating to suffocation and listening for the dreaded, inevitable footsteps which would herald the approach of his father. He had not long to wait, and without seeking for an explanation or asking a question, his father thrashed him there in the darkness. He was

kept in his room all day, and was not allowed to have his stocking. The nurse — the only friend he had in the world beside his brother — was dismissed for her well-meant effort in their behalf, and their Christmas was spoiled — not for that one year, but forever and ever. The boy is now a man, but the memory of that night has never lost its bitterness."

For a moment both sat silent; then Philip went on slowly:

"That was the beginning of his knowledge of an invincible, overruling power. Then the little companion — the one being who represented beauty and love to him — died when he was only ten, and he began to realize that there was nothing but misery to be his portion in life's lottery. Ill-health and a weird, unchildish reserve made him unpopular at school, so even the companionship of children of his own age was denied him. Then a more serious turn of his childish tendency to bronchitis made it necessary for him to give up his college career, thus forever killing all faith his father ever had in his ability to achieve anything, and for five years he buried himself in Arizona. From there, he was recalled by his father's death, and to a legacy of half a million of dollars, every penny of which he would have sacrificed for

the memory of a father whose hand had ever touched his in fatherly affection, or voice had vibrated with words of love. Then he began reading law in one of the best offices in New York, and for two years he devoted himself with absorbing interest to that. Then came the one great, wonderful dream into his life which gave him a glimpse of the Paradise which comes into some men's lives for the asking." Philip's head dropped forward on his chest, and the words he spoke seemed to Dorothy to come from immeasurable depths. For her sake he was unbarring the door of the torture chamber of his life wherein lay the mangled remains of his sunless youth.

"One day he met the niece of one of the men in whose office he was studying. She had just returned from a convent in Europe where she had been educated, and was to have her first experience in society that winter; but to this man she seemed, in spite of the luxuries in which she was placed, a forlorn and solitary figure, and his heart went out in sympathy for her in her loneliness, which he so well understood, and he loved her. He was too young and selfish to realize that it was unfair and hazardous to bind her when she had had no chance to meet other men, and when she said

she loved him, he believed it as he believed in his own affection for her. They were married at the time she was to have entered society, and as a married woman she began to see the world. She was beautiful and romantic, and became very popular, but the attention she received turned her head. Without the slightest warning she left him and went abroad, and his life lay wrecked before him. At first he was stunned; but when at last he came to his senses, he was too proud to beg her to return, so he began trying to piece together the broken fragments of his life. She wrote once from Europe to him, but except for that time he has never heard from her, and never once has he seen her, though it is a number of years." Philip paused a moment, while his eyes fastened upon the shimmering surface of the pond before him.

"It was a relief to him to feel that this was foreordained,—that the same Fate which had snatched every other blessing from his grasp, had wrenched from him this last and greatest treasure. Perhaps, as you said the other day, it was a selfish and ignoble way to bear grief; but it saved him from the useless recriminations of his conscience, and deadened the blow. All hope was dead to him forever, for Fate, with her relentless dominance, would not suffer him

to see any of the sunshine of life, and unconsciously he dropped into the apathetic stratum where the password is, 'Nothing matters,' and the only aim, to face without whimpering whatever comes.

"He spent many years in idleness, drifting from one port to another, in quest at first of forgetfulness, and afterward trying to pick up a little of the contentment which travel and change of scene often bring to people, throwing himself recklessly into the lives of the people he met, and yet all the time watching them with vague wonder and amusement at the serious effort they made to gain what they called pleasure. He never felt that the people he met were showing their real selves to him — life had become a huge masquerade, and each person was disguising himself with greater or less success under the garb he chose to wear — and he trusted no one, until he met a girl who was so noble and true that she, forcing belief in herself by her simple honesty, wakened the dormant conscience in the man's soul, and made him ashamed of the years he had spent in purposeless wandering. New, deep emotions arose in his heart and filled his thoughts, — a great thankfulness that she had come into his life before he was entirely lost to all sense of

truth and a great desire to be in her presence, at first because the atmosphere was so different from that in which he had lived for so many years, and afterward because she came to mean all of heaven and truth and beauty to him."

Philip paused, and Dorothy sat silent, struggling to keep the tears back. His story had moved her intensely, and the fatalism of it oppressed and saddened her. The silence fell heavy between them, and neither looked at the other.

Finally Dorothy said slowly:

"And there could be nothing between them, for he was bound to the woman who was his wife. This is where your fatalism comes in, Philip, — because only one course was open to him?"

"On the contrary," Philip said earnestly, following a morbid desire to probe Dorothy's consciousness and force her judgment, even though, as he felt sure it must, it passed sentence upon himself, "this is just where my fatalism ends. He was no longer bound to her, for she had deserted him, and many states in the Union would grant him divorce on that ground."

"Divorce?" Dorothy said half-interrogatively, almost as if she had not understood what he had said.

"Yes," Philip answered earnestly. "If life offered anything to him after he had borne so much, don't you think he might take it?"

"Not if it involved divorce, Philip, for I do not believe that divorce is right."

Dorothy's answer did not surprise Philip; he had a queer sensation of having known from the first what it would be, but his face whitened a little, and the lips were compressed about his teeth. He leaned forward and looked into her face.

"Don't you believe in divorce on any grounds, Dorothy?" he asked with insistent determination to hear the worst.

"No," Dorothy answered. "In separation — yes; but divorce can never seem right to me, for 'Life and Death' do not govern this world alone, Philip, but the life we live hereafter, and there can be no lawful stepping back or loosing bonds."

Philip rested his head on his hands, his elbows on his knees, and for a moment neither spoke. Finally he said in his every-day voice, with no perceptible emotion:

"That is a hard rule to make, Dorothy. In the case of my friend, you think he should give up the happiness which was almost his because the woman who had ruined his life, and whom

for a short two years he had called his wife, still lived, even though she had desecrated every sacred meaning of wifehood and abandoned him?"

Dorothy paused a little before answering; then she said slowly and distinctly, as if thinking of each separate word:

"Her sins were not his, Philip, and he was not responsible for them; but the moment he renounced the bond, he would become as guilty as she; and, furthermore, if he really loved the other girl, he would never subject her to the ignominy of an intimacy with him which could never be lawful while his wife lived. 'Whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder.' Our moral obligations can never be cast off because of another's sin — and, to my mind, the marriage vow is as insurmountable as death."

For a long time the silence was unbroken. Deep lines seamed Philip's face, and his lips settled into a grim smile. It was stoically to bear again, he knew. Fate could crush him, but she could not make him whimper or cry out. He did not look toward Dorothy, and she sat with her eyes upon the pond. After many minutes Philip spoke again, almost lightly:

"After all, Dorothy, you are more of a

Fatalist than I, for I admit my friend could mark out his future to some extent; but you refuse to grant him one little chance for happiness, and draw the curtain of fatalism around him, showing him only one path ahead."

Dorothy answered sadly, "You misunderstand me, Philip. There is no question of fatalism; he is a free agent; he can follow the moral instincts of his life and renounce the girl he loves, or he can cast aside all his better nature and ask her to share his life; but there is no question of half-right, — the roads are very straight ones, Philip, and neither admits of return. If he married the girl he loved, he would not be worthy of her, no matter what her position, for he would have sacrificed his manhood to his desires."

"But he could hardly be blamed, Dorothy, if he yielded to so great a temptation," Philip said.

Dorothy's eyes were dark and intense as she looked at him.

"If he married the girl he loved, Philip, they would never be happy, never, never, never, for the very foundations of happiness would be missing — those of respect and faith."

"And if the girl could be made to believe in divorce?"

"That is a different matter, Philip. You asked me to give my ideas, and I have told you what I believe. We can none of us judge for another. It is hard enough to adjust our own existence to our beliefs, without deciding for any one else. Fortunately we can shirk the responsibility of this decision, and leave it to them."

Philip rose wearily, and held out his hand to Dorothy. The fingers she touched were cold and his hand shook, and Dorothy wondered a little that he should have been so moved by the story he had told.

"How he loves his friend!" she thought, and she let her fingers rest in his hand for a moment, while she looked sympathetically into his face.

"It is very sad, Philip," she said softly; "but there may be some solution which we cannot see. No one can shift his responsibility; we must all face our own sorrows. Surely you need not bear this one!"

Philip's hand closed tight over Dorothy's, and his other hand rested tenderly on her soft hair as he looked into her eyes.

"No, Dorothy, we will shirk this," he said miserably. "You are right; there are sorrows enough of our own to bear without seeking for other people's."

CHAPTER VIII

HOLD me but safe again within the bond
Of one immortal look ! All woe that was,
Forgotten, and all terror that may be,
Defied — No past is mine, no future ;
Look at me.

R. BROWNING.

THE afternoon-tea hours, of which so much is made in Cairo, always found attractive tables full of people chattering about the porch at Shepheard's. The scene was gay and brilliant, and, except for the Arabs in native dress who flitted to and fro in service upon the guests, one might fancy he was in the heart of Paris, it was so thoroughly European. At five o'clock, every lady staying at Shepheard's sat beside her table, ready to receive the guests who should come in; and the most common invitation in all Cairo was, "Come over to tea, — this afternoon — to-morrow," as the case might be.

At first Dorothy made one about the table of Mrs. Westwood Lee; but later, as she began to know people more generally, she established a table of her own, about which her own little

coterie was always found. On one afternoon the guests assembled there were too numerous to be accommodated, and had grouped themselves about picturesquely, while she sent for more cups. Soft music came to them from the band across the porch, and one by one others were added to the group, till the scene was more than usually animated and attractive. Mr. Dike sat behind Dorothy, in earnest conversation with a man with whom he had become acquainted in Egypt, and Bobbie was here, there, and everywhere, as usual.

A tall, handsome officer of the English Army stood beside Dorothy's chair, gazing with undisguised admiration into her face. She was looking very well, and was thoroughly enjoying the excitement of the hour. Across the table sat two girls whom Dorothy had met at the "Ismaîlîeh," and the group nearest the table were discussing the Officers' Ball, which occurred at the Barracks the night before. The Arab returned with the cups, and Dorothy poured tea as she talked.

"Do you always enjoy balls as you seemed to last night, Miss Dike?" Captain Saunders asked her.

"Not always," Dorothy answered, as she put a bit of lemon into the steaming cup of

tea. "Sometimes they bore me; but there is a certain freedom about a ball in Cairo which is absent from a ball in Boston."

"It is less formal, perhaps."

"Yes," Dorothy laughed; "in spite of the fact that you English are such a punctilious people, I have never seen anything here which approaches the formality of the Boston people. Perhaps," she said, looking up at him, "it is because we are all more or less strangers in a strange land."

"Then, too," remarked Mr. Keith, an American whom Dorothy cordially liked, "perhaps, Miss Dike, if the truth were known, these English people who stay here all winter are particularly nice to us because we are a diversion, and there are really so few of them that they would be bored to death if they kept close to themselves."

"We will flatter ourselves, at any rate, Mr. Keith, that they could n't get along without us."

The captain leaned over Dorothy's chair, professedly to get another biscuit, but in reality to murmur in her ear:

"And you would n't be far from right, in your own case, Miss Dike."

"But what attracts me most," said Miss

Phillips, a tall dark girl who wore glasses, "is the easy way in which a ball is gotten up here. There is not half the hubbub made over it that we make over an afternoon tea in America."

"There are such resources here," Dorothy said. "Think of it! First of all, we are sure to have good weather; then we have a profusion of palms and roses for decoration, numerous bands always at our command, and quantities of lovely places for parties. Then, as regards brilliancy, when the officers are there in their bright uniforms, we are sure to have color, and a party can't help being a success," and she smiled at Captain Saunders.

"But there is so much in the spirit, Miss Dike. We keep on the gala spirit all the time here in Cairo."

"The life is certainly enchanting," Dorothy answered.

"And don't you think, Miss Dike, that English uniforms are perfectly lovely?" Miss Curtis asked across the table. She was a pretty little American who seemed to Dorothy hopelessly young. After her remark she happened to remember that Captain Saunders was in the army, and she subsided in confusion. Everybody laughed at her embarrassment till she joined in too.

"All but the spurs, Miss Curtis," Dorothy said, when the laugh had abated. "I must say I think spurs are out of place in a ballroom."

Little Miss Curtis was not to be vanquished without a bit of a struggle, so she said, "I like the spurs, they are so picturesque."

Captain Saunders took off his cap and bowed very low. "I am glad we have a champion, Miss Curtis," whereupon the pretty little American retired into deeper confusion.

"Perhaps if you had worn a chiffon gown, Miss Curtis, and come away with it fringed around the skirt, you might denounce the spurs too," Dorothy said. "My dress is literally in rags, and I am old-fashioned enough to like to wear my party gowns more than once."

"I will start a petition immediately to the Commander, Miss Dike, for the future abolition of the spurs."

Dorothy laughed and held out her hand:

"Thank you so much, Captain Saunders, and be sure that you allow me to head the list."

The captain took the hand she offered, and looked into the glowing face. They made an attractive picture, and more than one pair of

eyes was aware of it. As Dorothy's eyes dropped from the captain's, they rested on Philip, who stood across the porch near Mrs. Lee's table. It was the first time she had seen him since the Shubra drive. He held a saucer in one hand, and had half raised the cup to his lips. He was looking at Dorothy, and their eyes met. The might of his love had overthrown the guard Philip had set upon his heart, and his soul, bared of all subterfuge, was looking through his eyes, and for one moment Dorothy saw and understood; the next, she had caught her lips between her teeth to hide their trembling, and dropped the curtains of her eyes upon the shafts of light which rose in answer to his rash avowal; but she could not conceal the tell-tale color in her cheeks, or the heaving of her breast which sent the lace upon her bosom rising and falling convulsively, and one man standing beside her chair, having missed no detail of her distress, knew the signs, and read in them the death knell to his budding hopes; but when he turned to ascertain the cause of Dorothy's disquietude, he saw only the non-committal back of a man who bent over Mrs. Lee's table, waiting for his second cup of tea.

CHAPTER IX

WHAT ! gone without a word ?
Two Gentlemen of Verona.

THE next morning, instead of the customary meeting with Philip, as Dorothy came from *déjeuner*, an Arab handed her a note.

Her mind was awhirl from the secret she had read in Philip's eyes, and her hands trembled as she broke the seal. It was very brief, and Dorothy stifled a sob in her throat as she read. It was almost formal, and stated simply that he had received an invitation to go up the Nile with some friends, and, since he had not taken the trip, he thought it was too good a chance to lose. He would see her on his return, and, till then, good-bye.

Never a word of regret at the separation or request for permission to write to her, only a cold good-bye! — and the light went out of Dorothy's day. Yesterday she had felt convinced of his love, and now she doubted it. If she had read his look aright, it meant that he loved her with his whole heart and soul; and yet he had left her with little more than a

word of farewell. She began to feel that perhaps she had been unmaidenly; for certainly Philip must have seen an answering gleam in the eyes that met his. It was very unkind of him to leave her like this, and the tears rose to her eyes. She choked them back, and went forward to meet her father, giving him Philip's letter to read.

The next week Dorothy was plunged into the wildest gayeties. Parties, teas, drives, musicals, and all kinds of festivities she enjoyed under Mrs. Lee's chaperonage, and, womanlike, the more her heart ached, the deeper she entered into the diversions which were offered to her. She was very popular, and had enough attention to turn the head of any girl; but her love for Philip was her balance-wheel, and kept her from finding more than a casual interest in the people she met.

One afternoon Dorothy had taken a book and hidden herself in the corner of the music-room beside the window, hoping for a few moments' quiet where she could dream of Philip, when she was interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Lee with a woman whom she did not know, and, as Dorothy rose to meet them, Mrs. Lee came forward and took both her hands affectionately:

"Dorothy dear, I was just going to send for you, for I have brought a very old friend of mine, whom I want you to meet. You must be great friends, too, for I love you both so dearly."

Then she presented the Baroness von Hausheim, and Dorothy turned toward the most beautiful woman she had ever seen.

The Baroness was tall, and her height was accentuated by the mourning which she wore, and her face, with its halo of yellow hair, looked like a cameo against the black setting. Her eyes, deep blue, with lashes and brows so dark that they cast shadows on her cheeks, studied Dorothy for a moment; then a most winning smile lighted her face, and she held out her hand:

"I am sure it will not be my fault, if your wishes are not fulfilled," she said sweetly to Mrs. Lee, while she stood looking at Dorothy. The younger woman's heart went out to her at once, and presently they were talking over the delights of Cairo as old friends. The Baroness had spent all her winters for the last five years in Cairo, and told Dorothy she knew all the officers and their families. Her husband had been a major in the army, and while he was in the interior she had stayed at Cairo. Her

house, which was just out of Cairo, had not been opened since the Baron died, two years before, and this winter, she told Dorothy, she was going to open it. Before she left, the Baroness asked her to drive with her the following afternoon, which was Sunday, and Dorothy willingly accepted, for she was strongly drawn toward her.

The next afternoon Dorothy felt a pardonable pride as she walked across the porch by the Baroness's side to the carriage which awaited them. It was luxurious and thoroughly Egyptian in its appointments, and the two saïs out-runners in their red-and-white costumes, with their long golden wands, pleased Dorothy's fancy. They went to the Gezereh drive, and slowly circled the shady road, enjoying indolently the beauty of the country. They were early, and at first had the drive almost to themselves; but gradually the carriages began to appear, and the scene grew gay and animated. The Baroness seemed moody and silent during the first of their drive, and Dorothy soon discovered that she did not care to talk, so she settled herself quietly, and revelled in the view before her.

With the enlivening scene, the Baroness's apathy disappeared, and she grew brilliant and

animated. It seemed to Dorothy that she knew every one in Cairo, and as she bowed to the different people, she gave a word of explanation to Dorothy, which the latter found altogether fascinating. Dorothy discovered she could be a charming companion, when she made the effort, though all her remarks were tinged with bitterness and cynicism. Many of her ideas were utterly opposite to Dorothy's; but her laxity in different things Dorothy attributed to her long residence abroad, where she had grown European in her life and tastes.

They met Mr. Keith in the drive, alone in a victoria, and the Baroness ordered her driver to stop. His carriage turned, and he came and stood by Dorothy's side.

"Now I 'll tell you what we will do," the Baroness said girlishly, bringing her gloved hands together with a little snap. "Mr. Keith shall join us, and we will go to the circus."

What the circus was, Dorothy did not know; but her Puritanical spirit rose in rebellion at the thought of any kind of a circus on Sunday. Her face fell, and the Baroness noticed it.

"Don't you want to go, my dear?" she said sweetly. "Every one goes in Cairo, and it is quite the thing on Sundays."

Dorothy struggled hard between her desire

not to be rude and her wish to refuse. Mr. Keith saw her embarrassment and interceded.

"Madame la Baronne, girls don't go to circuses on Sunday in America, and Miss Dike is a thoroughbred American, so you must not tempt her."

The Baroness very graciously withdrew her invitation.

"I have been so long away, that I have quite forgotten how they do things there," she said apologetically. "After all, the circus is stupid at best, horribly stupid! Come, Mr. Keith, either get in with us, or start your carriage, for Miss Dike and I must be turning back."

Mr. Keith looked from the little seat the Baroness pulled down for him to his long legs, and concluded the two were not compatible, so he went back to his own carriage.

When theirs moved again, the Baroness turned toward Dorothy impulsively, and touched the hand which held her parasol.

"I like you, Dorothy," she said. "Do you know why? You make me think of myself at your age. There is not so much difference in our ages, and yet you seem a child to me, — so fresh and sweet, — while I am a thousand years old, and life has lost all its beauty."

"Do you miss the Baron so?" Dorothy asked sympathetically.

"The Baron —" she answered abstractedly; and then she drew herself together, "I was not thinking of the Baron."

They were crossing the Cairo bridge when the Baroness spoke again.

"I suppose you are perfectly happy, Dorothy, and the future promises nothing but beauty to you. Your life is like a clean, new book with no marks upon it. What story will be written there, I wonder, as the years go on? You will never be ashamed of it, at any rate, I know."

Dorothy turned toward the Baroness, and met her earnest gaze.

"Will you let me be your friend, Dorothy?" she asked with strange tremulousness. "I should love you so, dear."

From that time Dorothy's intimacy with the Baroness commenced. As she unfolded her mind and personality to Dorothy, she found it marvellously rich in experience and thought. All the love which she had buried with her mother seemed to be born again in her attachment to the Baroness, and she gave her sweet, untainted affections unreservedly, and was content.

One day when Dorothy was lounging in the

morning room of the Baroness's beautiful home in the Faubourg, she lifted a book which lay face downward on the table. It was a volume of Swinburne's poems, and was open at the "Garden of Proserpine," and she threw it down with a gesture of disgust.

"Are you a devotée of Swinburne's, too, Renée?" she asked.

The Baroness smiled. "Your 'too' implies another, Dorothy."

"I was thinking of a man I know," Dorothy said, in answer to the implied question, "and a conversation we had on the subject. Philip liked the fatalism, and I hated it."

"Philip?" the Baroness said. "Dorothy, what is this? I am already jealous of him, for he is the one man you have never spoken of."

Dorothy answered with affected surprise, "Have I never spoken of him, Renée — Mr. Philip Morrison? We met him here, and have known him very well, as strangers in a strange land learn to know one another."

The Baroness bent low over the embroidery she held in her hand.

"Who is he, Dorothy?"

"He is a New Yorker, dear, who came across for his health, and who is spending the winter

here. He is on the Nile trip now," she answered.

The Baroness raised her head, and looked at Dorothy. Her brows were knotted as if trying to remember something, and Dorothy thought she looked pale; but she said slowly, as if unravelling a puzzle:

"I used to know a man by that name years ago. I wonder if this can be the same one! What is he like, Dorothy?"

"He is very handsome, I think," she replied, wondering how she could speak dispassionately of the man she loved with her whole heart. "He is tall, and has very beautiful dark eyes, and quite a wonderful voice, it is so full of vibrations and music. I can't tell you what he is like, Renée, he is so hard to describe."

"Your description tallies very well with mine, Dorothy. My Philip Morrison" — the Baroness lingered a little over the words — "married a girl I knew well."

A blur came before Dorothy's eyes. "Married?" she breathed.

The Baroness, intent on her reminiscences, went on, heedless for once of Dorothy:

"Yes, he married a girl who was not worthy of him. They had a very unhappy, tragic life together, and she was eventually lost on the

'Elbe'—you know when that steamer was wrecked on its way to America."

So this accounted for Philip's pessimistic views of things. A great pity for him came over Dorothy. How thoughtless she had been in her conversations with him!

"Tell me some more of the Mr. Morrison you knew," Dorothy demanded.

The Baroness smiled. "You won't understand, Dorothy, how so charming a man could be forgotten; but, after his wife died, I lost track of him. I wrote him once from Germany, in reference to it, and he replied; since that I have never heard a thing. But this must be the same man, I think, for everything suggests him."

She rose indifferently, and, taking up the book of poems, carefully tore out the pages which contained the "Proserpine."

"You were right, Dorothy dear, the poem is hateful," she said, as she tore it into bits.

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CHAPTER X

I WAS that life that held a love in mine,
One perfect dream of days that being fled,
I walk a shadow through earth's awful round,
Alive, who should be dead.

THEODOSIA GARRISON.

"LIFE is made up of stages, Dorothy," the Baroness said one afternoon shortly after this. They had been sitting in silence for some time, for Dorothy, coming in for the day, had found the Baroness in one of her silent moods, and did not care to break in upon it; so she had curled up by the window with her embroidery, and interested herself in her work and in her thoughts. Finally the Baroness spoke abruptly, and with no apparent reason.

"Life is made up of stages, Dorothy, and as we grow older, and look back upon it, we can count the incidents which went to make it up almost as if they were rounds in a ladder. The intervening time slips out of our memory, and only vivid living pictures stand out against the background of our past."

She spoke softly, as if to herself, and slowly, as if she were putting into words thoughts which she had been pondering for a long time. Dorothy dropped her embroidery, and listened sympathetically, for it was at these times she came to know the Baroness best. At rare intervals she had opened her heart to her in this impersonal manner, and Dorothy felt in a vague way that it was a kind of outlet for the pent-up memories which went to make up her life. They were always the outcome of one of her sad, depressed moods, and in their turn were followed by a frightful headache, which ended in a nervous collapse.

"This one marks a day so replete with happiness that the joy is almost pain, even in the memory of it; that one, the burden of a sin, the scars of which we must carry to the grave. That one was a turning-point, and the fierce struggle makes us faint and sick as we recall it, even through the mist of many years. Then the agony of that one, when we wrung our hands and cried, with tear-stained faces, 'O God, I cannot bear the pain!'"

The Baroness paused and looked sadly into the distance.

"Yes, Dorothy, it all goes to make up life. We bear the pain, and, what is harder, the joy.

We lift our shame-crushed heads, and stumble on, and soon get used to our changed position, and the day of the crisis of our life soon passes into the other days, and it is only as we look back upon it from the end of life, that we understand its real significance."

She spoke gloomily, and Dorothy answered lightly, hoping to turn the current of her thoughts:

"The end of life, Renée! I should think you were Methuselah, to hear you talk."

A fleeting smile lighted Renée's face, making the shadow upon it more intense in its passing.

"We do not measure our life by years, Dorothy; but by incidents and emotions, and death does not come alone when the heart-beats cease."

The eyes of the Baroness fastened upon the dancing spots on the floor made by the sun shining through the leaves of the mimosa-tree which grew outside her window.

"Most of the people who reach old age have buried themselves in the grave of some experience. That is why they welcome a bodily death so willingly; the spirit — the heart — that which made life to them — has lain a dead thing since one never-to-be-forgotten

day, and only the eyes of memory keep watch beside the covered grave."

"You speak as if there were no happiness for anybody, Renée, — as if a few moments of emotion make up all of real life there is."

"You are too young to understand, Dorothy. Happiness comes to the most of us, — for a moment or for years; but it passes, and when it goes, life is dead to us, whether the casket closes over our bodies or not. We bear years of dreary monotony, simply that we may have a few moments of life, — real life, when our heart is touched to the core, when all the springs of emotion are stirred to their depths, and the struggling and misery of the past, the wretchedness and pain of the future, are as nothing. We have lived the supreme moment. The years of monotonous waiting are weighed against it and found wanting. We have looked into eyes which searched our inmost soul, and all the recesses of our consciousness have waked in response; but when that light is faded, a darkness which is impenetrable settles upon us."

"But you are talking of love, Renée," Dorothy said, and a vague terror came over her. She had looked into eyes which spoke to her inmost soul — had the light faded forever for her? She began to comprehend what the

Baroness meant. She had loved and lost, and all the beauty of her life was behind her. Dorothy crept over beside Renée's chair, and slipped her fingers into the other's hand.

"Perhaps our Heaven is to be the re-living of the fair things our mortal lives have known," she said softly.

The Baroness turned toward her, and looked long into the sweet face.

"Dorothy, if there is an eternity for us all, it ought to be very beautiful to make up for the wretchedness there is in life. There is hardly a picture of a future fair enough to make me prefer it to the endless, silent sleep of oblivion."

Dorothy, with her clean, sinless past, could only vaguely understand the bitterness which must lie behind the life of the Baroness, to make her so morbid and depressed. Under the gloom of her misery, Dorothy sat helpless and silent.

"One day stands out in my memory, Dorothy, so clear I dream of it at night often, and wake crying with the misery of it,—the day that I realized all happiness was dead for me forever. The years of life allotted to me may be long or short, but there can never be anything like the agony of that day."

Dorothy did not doubt that the Baroness spoke of the day the Baron died, and gauging Renée's love by the love she bore Philip, she could appreciate what it must have meant to her.

"There is something in having borne the worst, Dorothy," the Baroness went on, as if thinking aloud, "for it makes one indifferent to the future. The heart can bear just so much pain, and if it is concentrated in one great sorrow, then all feeling is dead to it."

"You talk about the heart being dead to all feeling, Renée, and yet your eyes are full of tears as you speak."

"For the old sorrow, child; the pain of that never dies — it is only to what comes after that the heart is dead."

"And yet you love me, Renée," Dorothy said, moved by a slight wave of jealousy to make her confess it, and by the more real desire to lead the conversation into less harrowing channels.

Renée turned toward her with motherly tenderness. "So much, Dorothy," she said solemnly, "that if I could be sure you would be happy all through your life, I would consider that compensation for all I have suffered."

The words came back to the Baroness long

after, and brought with them Dorothy's face as she saw it now, so pure and girlish, an uncomprehending sadness burning in the eyes, the lips quivering with pity for the woman whose tragedy she only dimly understood — came back to her with the sacredness of a pledge binding her to cherish Dorothy's happiness at whatever pain to herself.

Late in the afternoon, Mrs. Westwood Lee and Mr. Keith came in for a cup of tea. They had just come from the races and games, and brought a spirit of fun and frivolity into the depressed atmosphere of Renée's drawing-room. With the wonderful changeableness which was one of her most marked characteristics, the Baroness arose from her depression, and entered into the conversation with apparently no thought aside from the subjects in hand. Dorothy watched her with wonder in her eyes, as she deftly prepared tea for her guests. Could it be possible that this brilliant society woman was the same one who had seemed crushed beneath the weight of her sorrow a few hours before? Could she really feel as deeply as she appeared to, and still throw off her melancholy with such apparent ease? These thoughts passed through Dorothy's consciousness, but found no answer, for as well as she knew

Renée, she could see no semblance of acting in the guise she now wore. She gave the question up, as beyond her understanding, and turned her attention to the conversation.

They were speaking of a slight accident which had occurred at the sports during the Presentation of the " Balaclava Melée."

Thirty horsemen, gayly dressed with red plumes in their hats, faced thirty others wearing blue plumes, across a space of about two hundred feet. At a signal from the grand stand they approached each other, and the horses were to pass by on the run, while each knight knocked the plume from his opponent's hat with his spear. The side who captured the most plumes won the " Melée."

The signal was given, and the knights rode toward each other, each man's eyes upon his opponent's hat. The stallions had been racing, and were thoroughly excited, many becoming almost unmanageable, and in some way they rushed too near the centre, crowding and jostling each other until horses and men were thrown into a heap which, for a moment, looked serious.

When they were at last extricated, it was discovered that the injuries were confined to one man, Captain Williams of the English Army.

"I don't think his injuries were very severe," Mrs. Lee explained, as she poked the lemon in her cup with her spoon, "for he walked off with very little help from the surgeon, who appeared to be examining his arm."

"Hard for the little widow, if anything happened to him," Mr. Keith remarked.

"Are they really devoted?" the Baroness asked.

"Why, he has no eyes for any one but her," Mrs. Lee said. "They are together all the time."

"But she is a grass widow, is n't she?" Mr. Keith asked.

"Her divorce is pending," Mrs. Lee answered. "I think she went to America somewhere,— Dakota, perhaps, where they present you with a divorce as a souvenir, when you pass through the state,— and is waiting for final settlements. There is some trouble over the disposition of a child, I believe."

"And if she gets a divorce, will he marry her?" Dorothy asked.

"I don't believe they 'll wait a minute, Dorothy. It 's a bad case," Mrs. Lee laughed. "I met an Arab on the stairs at the 'Ismaîlîeh' yesterday with a basket on his head, as big as a table, full of flowers for her. It is fortunate

for these poor incompatibles that there is one place in the world where they can flee to be rid of marriage bonds, when another pair of eyes has made them irksome."

"Fortunate!" Dorothy exclaimed. "It's a crime! They should be ostracized!"

"Now, Dorothy, don't be too hard on them," Mrs. Lee said jestingly. "Think how dreadful it would be to be tied to a man for life who ate with his knife or wore trousers that bagged at the knees, especially if number two did neither."

Dorothy smiled in spite of herself. "How can you jest on anything so serious?" she asked reprovingly.

"Was I jesting?" Mrs. Lee said naïvely. "I don't know — those really would be rather serious faults to live with."

"All the trouble lies here, I think," the Baroness said quietly, entering the argument for the first time. "There is not enough fraternizing between the sexes. Girls are brought up to regard men as belonging to a different species from themselves, and taught to hide their real personality under various affectations, tending to enhance their beauty, presumably because in that lies their value to the men. Men, in their turn, accepting the plane

upon which we place them, think of the beauty of the body instead of the beauty of the soul; and when these two marry and settle down to the seriousness of life, they begin to know each other for the first time, and frequently that knowledge is fatal."

"Of course it is," Mrs. Lee said with mock seriousness, "what can you expect! He likes figures in the wall paper, and she adores stripes. He wants his eggs boiled for breakfast, and she thinks boiled eggs are disgusting. Marriage is a lottery, the best way you can fix it, and that is why we *must* have divorces."

Her sally failed to lift the weight of the conversation, hardly winning a smile, and Mr. Keith ignored it too, returning earnestly to the Baroness's statements:

"We are working out of that, Baroness, in America, I mean; the movement we are pleased to call the 'emancipation of women' is changing the standards of the sexes in many ways," Mr. Keith said.

"Perhaps," Renée answered listlessly, toying with her cup, "I belong to a past decade any way, and only speak from observation I have made myself, and most of the unhappy marriages I have known, have been caused by starting wrong."

Renée looked weary of the whole subject.

"Then we are responsible for the wrong start, and should bear the burdens it brings," Dorothy said.

"After all, I don't agree with Renée that the system is all wrong," Mrs. Lee said, for the first time reflecting the seriousness of the others. "You are in a perilous position in America, Mr. Keith. The swing of the pendulum may go too far the other way, and produce, through too great laxity, if not the same wrongs, kindred ones which are just as bad."

"But it is a move in the right direction," Mr. Keith answered, "and matters will adjust themselves in time."

"I don't know about that. I like more or less formality. On the whole, I believe we like each other a great deal better for the deceptions we practice than we would if they were not there. Suppose we should all throw off our disguises as they do at a masquerade ball, think what horrors might be disclosed," and Mrs. Lee laughed at the picture she was drawing. "Now Dorothy might show a very wicked little heart under her saint's dress; I might be a professional shop-lifter; Mr. Keith might be a villain of the deepest dye; and even

Renée, here, might be a — oh — a grass widow for all we know."

Crash! And the Baroness bent to pick up the fragments of the bit of china which had slipped out of her hands. Mr. Keith came to her aid, and no one noticed her for a moment. When the pieces were all together, a general movement was made to go, and when they turned to bid the Baroness good-night, she met them with outstretched hand and a little gracious word of parting, while the wretchedness in her eyes was belied by the courageous smiling of her lips.

CHAPTER XI

AND my eyes hold her. What is worth
The rest of heaven, the rest of earth?

R. BROWNING.

BOBBIE was ill, not critically ill, but he seemed to have a touch of fever and lay quiet and weak in his room at Shepheard's. The run of fever would probably be a long one, as it had started so insidiously. Dorothy kept her place by his side, and, in her anxiety concerning him, the pain of the Baroness's disclosure faded out, and she faced the knowledge of Philip's marriage calmly. She could not understand his reticence in regard to it, unless he took it for granted she must know of it. A fierce, unreasoning jealousy took possession of her when she thought of the woman who had been his wife, and she almost gloried in the fact that their life together had been an unhappy one. The Baroness said she knew him many years ago, and perhaps Philip had outlived the suffering of it. Had he loved his wife, she wondered, and could a man love two

women devotedly? For Dorothy felt sure, even in the light of the Baroness's story, that Philip did love her. All his pessimistic, fatalistic tendencies must be the outcome of his tragic life, and she had had so little patience with his views. What right had she to judge another when her life had been so full of beauty? Even the cruel suffering from her mother's death had held no bitterness in it, and she could not understand the poignant wretchedness such as he had known. At first she tried to force herself to forget that Philip loved her, and she would torture herself by thinking of his wife, and of his affection for her, for he must have loved her, or he would never have married her. Philip was, above all, loyal and honest, and he would never have been led into a marriage where his whole heart did not respond. In the days of Bobbie's illness she had ample time to think, and she planned her attitude toward Philip one day, only to change it the next. At first she tried to make herself believe that she did not love him, that he only interested her, and had grown so close a friend simply because they had been thrown so much together; but, accustomed as she was to frank self-analysis, she brought her whole judgment to bear on her intercourse with Philip, and knew that she

loved him. When she had convinced herself of this, there was no wavering possible. She accepted the fact unquestionably, as she would have a lesser thing. Whether Philip loved her or not, she knew she had given her love for life and death, and there was no retreat possible. She did not try to discover what the end would be — in fact, no end presented itself. She rested in the knowledge that had come to her, content to let the future take its course. For three weeks Dorothy did not leave Bobbie except for short drives with her father, and the Baroness and Mrs. Lee were the only persons she saw outside. She had had no word from Philip since he left for the Nile, and of course he had heard nothing of Bobbie's illness. Toward the first of the boy's convalescing, Dorothy was sitting one afternoon by the window, enjoying, in a listless way, the beauty of the country, when a note was brought to her; she recognized Philip's handwriting, and tore it open with eagerness. It was written in the old familiar way, with no superscription, and signed with his initials.

I came as fast as I could from Wâdi Halfah, when I heard of Bobbie's illness. Can't I see you for a few moments in the little writing-room?

P. H. M.

In the little writing-room Philip sat awaiting her coming. The six weeks had been a bitter struggle for him, and left him worn and ill. They had been a season of retrospective self-analysis and self-censure to him, and had convinced him that, unfortunate as it might be, he was sure of one thing, — his love for Dorothy. All the nobler instincts of his nature went out in protest that this should be, and he knew that whatever her feeling for him was, he had no right to accept her love. Only one course was open to him. He would see Dorothy again, and that would be all. After a few days' companionship, he would leave her and go back to his old life, and try to forget the new. Every feeling of tenderness and passion impelled him toward her, while all his instincts of honor kept them apart. He heard her step in the hall, her hand on the door, and with desperate control he steadied himself and rose to greet her. The face Dorothy met when she entered the room was not tender and sympathetic, as she fancied it would be, but instead, the torture in the effort Philip was exerting for self-control made his whole attitude stern and repellent. She felt tired and weak from the strain of the past weeks. The pride which before had stood her in good stead, at this

crucial point deserted her, and she felt her lips tremble. Philip's eyes were riveted upon her face. He had not realized the agony the meeting would be, and the white, trembling face before him was almost more than he could bear. Before his intense gaze, her own eyes fell, and the hand which clasped the knob slipped to the other, grasping it convulsively. The silence was growing oppressive; she knew she must speak.

"I thought—" she began and hesitated, and then she blundered on, "it is a long time. He has been so ill," and then the uselessness of the effort overcame her. "Oh, I am so tired!" she half sobbed. Her eyes met Philip's with unconscious pleading in their depths. The blood surged over her cheeks and forehead and neck. She felt humiliated and ready to cry.

Philip's eyes devoured the down-cast lids, the trembling lips, and rising color, and a fierce resentment against Fate rose within him, unlocking the flood-gates of his heart, dammed so long by the strength of his will, and the mighty torrent of his love rushed forward with desperate swiftness and inevitable results.

The sternness faded from his face, and the look that met hers was full of tenderness and

understanding. He took a step toward her and held out his arms. With a glad cry, she darted forward and hid her face on his breast, sobbing her heart out as she nestled in the haven of his embrace.

To him there was no past or future. The present was all-powerful. He threw back his head with a gesture of defiance, and strained her to his heart.

CHAPTER XII

My grief lies all within ;
And these external manners of laments,
Are merely shadows to the unseen grief
That swells with silence in the tortured soul ;
There lies the substance.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE private dining-room at the "Ismaîlîeh" was the scene of a merry luncheon. Mrs. Westwood Lee was entertaining a party of twelve, and the round table shone with the lighted candles, glistening silver, and sparkling glass. Masses of orange blossoms, in a large centre bowl, shot dazzling bits of light upon the mirror below, and threw their perfume prodigally about the room.

The first pangs of hunger had been appeased with the dainty dishes offered, and the entrées had been reached when the conversation turned upon a story written by an American which had just been published, — the story of a girl who gave up the man she loved because he, upon being pressed by her father, had confessed his prior attachment for another woman, and the young people were more than

usually interested in the subject, and each had her opinion to express.

Miss Curtis, charmingly girlish in a pink costume, declared that she did not blame the girl at all for refusing to marry a man who had loved another woman, and the others took up the conversation with more or less warmth, till the luncheon began to suffer in the heat of the argument.

"He confessed that although he had renounced the other love, because of its unworthiness, he would go back to it if he could honestly; and I don't blame a girl for not wanting to marry a man who said that," little Miss Curtis said courageously.

"But he could n't go back to it," Mrs. Lee remarked; "he knew it was denied him, and he had made up his mind long before to put her out of his life, and had worked hard to that end. He was a noble man, — a man whose word would be kept. She had nothing to fear."

"No; she had nothing to fear," Dorothy said meditatively, — "nothing as regards his faithfulness of action toward her; but his thoughts, his longings, and perhaps his continued efforts to forget, — she must have always felt the strength of those if she married him."

"That's all very well, Dorothy," Mrs. Lee replied; "but how many men, or women for that matter, do you suppose, can offer the one they marry an absolutely untouched heart?"

"Not untouched," Dorothy answered, "she did not demand that; but no man should marry one woman when his heart is full of another, and I believe Latimer had not recovered so completely from his first love affair that he could feel that it was consigned to his past, buried deep enough never to rise again as a vital force in his life."

"Then you think she was justified in her attitude?" Mrs. Lee asked lightly. Dorothy waited a moment before she answered:

"I don't just know," she said guardedly, bringing her eyes together till two straight lines separated her brows. "If the regret was gone, I don't think I should much care; but he was not ready to admit that he did not long for the old love, and would not take it if he could."

"He was honest enough to confess to a prior *affaire du cœur*, when most men in his position would have lied," Mrs. Lee said approvingly. "I admire him immensely. I should have married him on the spot, and had the bishop perform the ceremony, if I'd been she."

"It might have involved complications," Miss Phillips said; "for things touching on that past would constantly have been recurring to the girl, if she did marry him, and probably she would have worked herself into a jealous frenzy over that past sometime, and eventually have left him; so it was better the other way."

"She would have had something tangible to work on, any way," the Baroness said, smiling across the table at Miss Phillips. "I knew a girl once," she added rather lightly, in her well modulated voice, "who left the man she had married for less than that."

"That sounds interesting, Renée," Dorothy said. "Tell us about it."

The Baroness toyed indifferently with her salad for a moment, then she dropped her fork and bent forward on the table, facing the eyes which were turned upon her with various expressions of interest and curiosity.

"This girl left the man because she dared not face the possibilities of the future." Her eyes drifted past the mystified faces about her until they reached Dorothy's, and there they rested a moment before dropping to her plate.

"Of all situations, that is the most unique," Miss Phillips remarked. "I 'm sure the story is worth hearing."

"Yes, go on," the others said in a breath. The Baroness lifted her brows slightly, and an odd little smile touched the corners of her mouth.

"It seems queer to us, does n't it, to all of us," she said slowly, "brought up in the arms of luxury, that a girl could be so wildly happy once in her life, that for very fear of having that happiness marred, she chose to renounce it and leave the memory unscathed for 'there is even a happiness that makes the heart afraid.'"

The Baroness sat leaning forward, her elbows upon the table, and her hands flattened together over a gold initialled miniature-case which lay in their palms. For an instant her lips dropped upon them, and her lashes swept her cheeks; then she lifted her head and continued her story, but the hand which slipped under the table held the bit of gold within its clasp.

"This girl was always starved, I think, — starved for the very crusts of affection; for she was an unwelcome child, — the child of sin and shame, and motherless from birth, she was left to the care of a woman who tolerated her until the little money her mother had had about her was gone, and then thrust her into a convent to grow up, unloved and unloving, among the ascetic sisters. The atmosphere of the convent

warped her brain and tortured her heart, restricted all her natural tendencies of impulse, imagination and affection, until she grew to regard them as sins, and strove to make her inner consciousness as unattractive and unnatural as her outward garb. In this way she grew to womanhood, beautiful save for a look of repression pitiful upon a face so young, childlike in the workings of her brain and conscience, and strangely unsophisticated in the customs of the world. Like a tight folded-bud, undeveloped in the shade of the garden, she lived among the sisters, ready to expand into the glory of a full-blown rose under the warmth of the sun's rays and the kiss of the dewdrops. Then the man who was really her father, though she did not know this till long afterward, in a moment of bitter atonement for his sin, took her from the cloister to his home.

"She was no credit to him; for, in her transplanting, she appeared only an overgrown lily, stiff and out of place; and realizing this, — for she was abnormally sensitive, — she grew more shy and reserved, until the anxious interest this man had evinced toward her changed to undisguised intolerance. Then, at the height of her unhappiness, she met a man who grasped at the first glance, her loneliness, and in whose eyes she

read something more than mere curiosity. Her poor starved heart swelled to bursting, and she went to her room that night to lie awake staring up into the blackness, conscious only of two heavenly eyes looking into hers. Their romance was brief. Three weeks after they met, they were made man and wife, and he took her to a beautiful house in New York, and lavished every luxury that money could buy upon her. Under the power of his love, her heart expanded like our little dry flowers under the merciful irrigation, and she put out every effort to rise to his immeasurable height, for to her he was a God, and she was within the boundary of Paradise. But she was so simple, so ignorant, so unsophisticated, with such a discouraging amount to learn of the world's ways. She did not realize that in every Paradise the serpent lurks, ready to destroy; that the well-bred smile and shake of little gloved fingers could be like a poisoned barb, sent sure and swift to a quivering heart; that a woman's loyalty to her husband was measured by the cleverness she displayed in covering her amours; that a man's friends could use that friendship to make love to his wife. Her convent-taught ideas of honor and chastity were too high for her to realize these things in a day; but the

serpent began wriggling his way into this garden of Eden, and the poor simple convent-bred girl, with her pitiful lack of humor, failed to see that the serpent was only a stuffed one after all."

The Baroness paused a moment, watching the Arabs indifferently, as they noiselessly served the guests. "She made a great deal of little things," she said measuredly. "None of us, brought up as we have been, would have failed to see the sham; but she, with her lack of discrimination, had dropped from the heights where she had believed that all things were good, to the depths where everything was evil, and then she began to see a change in her husband; even he had altered in the readjustment of her mental position. He had always treated her as a child, showered her with luxuries, shielded her as far as he could from everything which would worry or sadden her,—in fact, made a toy of her; but any approach to intellectual companionship he warded off with caresses and protestations. 'I don't want you to understand, sweetheart, I can't have your dear head puzzled with these knotty problems.' He seemed to be satisfied to keep her always a beautiful plaything, — something to love and caress and amuse. His mistake lay in failing

to realize that the child he married had grown into a woman, with a woman's mind and heart yearning after the soul of things. Of the subjects which interested him, of which his life away from her was made, he would not speak to her, and sometimes she would listen to his arguments with other people — men, and occasionally women — and watch the sword-play of their intellectual fencing-bout with heart-rending rage and despair. Why could she not meet him upon this ground as well as upon the physical side? Did he only love her beauty? He was warping her soul, could he not see? Her hands would long sometimes to mar that beauty which kept her from touching his inner life. If it was that he loved, an end would come to it, for her beauty would go. Could she bear to live with him, years perhaps, after it had gone, realizing that his love had died with it? No, a thousand times, no!"

The Baroness dipped her hand into the bowl before her, watching the water drip from her fingers before she spoke again. She had yielded to an unexplainable desire to tell the story, playing upon the sympathies of the girls about the table, as a juggler plays with razor-edged knives, watching the scintillating light on the flashing blades with morbid fascination, until

the steel slipped and struck her hand, surprising her with the keenness of the pain. She lifted her head with an effort, and went on :

" Then she made one desperate resolve, this child with the sense of humor lacking; she would throw her whole soul into living the life he had planned for her; dress — her costumes should be the talk of the town; flirt — always within the boundary of discretion; and dazzle the world with her beauty and grace. If there was any happiness to be found in that life, she would discover it. So she devoted all her energies to that end, became the subject of every toast, the cynosure of every eye, and, as her success grew, her misery increased. She had hoped underneath it all that her husband would learn the emptiness of these frivolities, and beg her to come back to his fireside and live for him alone; but no, the greater her success, the happier he seemed to be. He would watch her as you would watch a kitten playing in the sunshine, limiting her in nothing, making it possible for her to go to any lengths. Then the glaring facts faced her; for this end he had married her, to grace his household, entertain his friends, and make herself as nearly like the other women as she could. Well, under the realization, her childlike brain gave way in a

measure, I think, for she determined to leave him. She never could be like them ; she would learn to hate him, if he forced her. They were growing less and less companionable, and their very conversations were limited to the entertainments they gave and accepted. Sometimes, when her beauty left her, he would look at her as those other men looked at their wives, — anything would be better than that. She had had her happiness. It was great, more perhaps than comes to most people in a lifetime. If the good things of this world were to be bought and sold, she would pay the price of this, and any way she would always have it to remember. So she left him, went away leaving no clue to her whereabouts, — away with her broken heart and the memory of their life together."

The Baroness paused, pressing the fingers of her right hand hard against her lips. Every eye flashed its signal of distress upon her, only hers shone bright and tearless.

"In the afterglow of those two years she waited, waited, hoping that in some way God would bring it about that they would meet, that he would search for her, find her out, bring her back at any cost. It was a long time before hope died within her, and then — "

Her voice had dropped to a whisper, and

was lost in the onrush of memory. Some one breathed her last word interrogatively, and she awoke, giving a little shrug of her shoulders as she pushed her chair back from the table.

"Then," she said, without looking up, "one day they found the hurt had been too deep, and life was done — for her."

The guests were dangerously near a collapse, and, to save the situation, Mrs. Lee rose from the table. Then Miss Phillips turned toward the Baroness:

"And he, whatever became of the man?"

The Baroness glanced up from the gloves she was putting on, and her lips tried to simulate a smile. "I shall have to quote Kipling," she said. "That is another story."

With an effort the guests shook off the depression left by the Baroness's story, and made their adieus to Mrs. Lee. Then, like a huge mass of loosened flower petals, they fluttered from the softened light of the luncheon-room into the garish daylight of the foyer. Their spirits rose with the bound of healthy youth, and they were chattering gayly as they walked. Only one woman, unheeded in the confusion of departure, still stood with bent head, vainly trying to fasten her glove with her shaking fingers.

CHAPTER XIII

His honor rooted in dishonor stood
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.

TENNYSON.

THE night held few hours' sleep for Philip Morrison. When Dorothy left him, he staggered into the street and, hailing a cab, drove till the first faint glow of dawn began to show above the countless minarets. Then he went back to his hotel, only to throw himself upon the bed with eyes wide-open and mind keenly active. His action in all its enormity came before him, and he could find no censure strong enough for it. Yet over and above his self-condemnation, like a merciful narcotic, came the alluring memory of the moment he had held Dorothy in his arms, and kissed the lips lifted to his. He could form no resolutions when he thought of the beautiful, tearful face which had glowed into his in loyal surrender. "It is not for myself," he groaned again and again; "but that I must make her suffer."

When the day fully dawned, it found him no nearer a decision than before. While the

sunshine flooded his room, there was place for no other thought than his love for Dorothy, and his desire to be with her. After lunch, he took a carriage and drove to Shepheard's. Mr. Dike greeted him enthusiastically, and asked about his trip to the second cataract. Philip had great difficulty in controlling his impatience, and, as soon as he reasonably could, he suggested to Mr. Dike that Dorothy go for a drive with him.

Mr. Dike told him that she was lunching at the "Ismaîlîeh" with Mrs. Lee, but that Philip could go there for her if he wished, and that he would stay with Bobbie through the afternoon. So thither Philip went, arriving just as the ladies were leaving the dining-room, and ferreting Dorothy out from among the guests, he hastened toward her, in his eagerness brushing past a lady who stood with bent head and downcast eyes. When their hands met, Dorothy tried very hard to look unconcerned and demure, but her happiness was so great it illumined her face, and bubbled in the tones of her voice as she greeted him. In the carriage they sat in silence till they crossed the Cairo bridge, and turned toward the Gizereh gardens; then Dorothy looked at Philip with glowing eyes and just the suspicion of tears in her voice.

"Oh, Philip, am I really awake?" she murmured. "I have tried so hard to believe in my happiness, but it is so great I feel it cannot be true."

Philip took her hand, and held it to his lips. What did they care for the staring Arabs who passed them? He and Dorothy were alone in the world.

"You are more than all the world to me, Dorothy," he said gravely, with deep feeling.

In the beautiful gardens they got out of the carriage and walked about hand in hand, like two children. The suffocating odor of the orange blossoms pervaded everything, and for many years afterward on the breath of their perfume the scene would rise in Dorothy's memory, bringing with it an intense nostalgia — the labyrinth of tropical gardens with minarets flashing white in the summer sunshine, rising high above the trees, the little rustic bridge upon which they leaned to watch their reflection in the water below, the fingers shutting close upon her hand which spanned the rail, and two eyes burning sad and heavy in a face which bent above her. They climbed to the top of the tower, and sat over-looking the gardens.

"My happiness makes me almost sad, Philip,

for it seems too perfect to last," Dorothy said, as she stood leaning against the parapet by his side. "Are you sure you love me, dear?"

Philip clasped her passionately in his arms, and kissed her again and again.

"Do I love you, Dorothy dear?" he said fiercely beneath his breath, as he drank in every feature of the tremulous face raised to his. "How dare you ask me that? I believe I would perjure myself to any extent to win you. This is greater joy than I ever dreamed of knowing, and I would be content to die with you in my arms."

Dorothy drew herself away, and looked into his face. She was still shy of his demonstrations, but she took his hand and pressed it to her cheek.

"Oh, Philip! Why talk of dying when life is only just beginning for us?" she said earnestly. "Do you suppose I can make you happy, — utterly, supremely content? Will you forget all your pessimism and learn to look at the world through my rose glasses, Philip?"

He drew her to a seat and sat beside her before he answered:

"Dorothy, there could be no pessimism so deep that your love would fail to penetrate it,"

he said tenderly, and then he went on recklessly:

"We will live such a charmed existence, Dorothy; we will go to the ends of the earth; we will see all the wonders of all countries—"

"And once every five years we will come back here," Dorothy interrupted, — "a sacred pilgrimage to our Mecca in memory of these beautiful weeks."

A sudden thought occurred to Philip.

"I tell you what we will do, Dorothy. We'll be very romantic, like the lovers in some novel, — one of Black's, was n't it? — and make a vow that we will return to this place, whether together or separately, just five years from to-day."

His lips smiled; but there was a strained look about the eyes.

Dorothy laughed. "All right," she said. "Shall we come here to this spot, do you mean, or to Egypt?"

Philip pondered. "This place is likely to change," he said; "so I think the Sphinx would be a better trysting place. She is good for another five thousand years, and we must be sure of our rendezvous. Now, Dorothy, raise your hand so, and say these words after me," he said with exaggerated solemnity:

"I, Dorothy Dike, do solemnly swear —"

"*I, Dorothy Dike, do solemnly swear* —"

"— to return to the Sphinx —"

"— *to return to the Sphinx* —"

"— five years from to-day, March 15th —"

"— *five years from to-day, March 15th* —"

"— at three o'clock in the afternoon —"

"— *at three o'clock in the afternoon* —"

"— if I am alive and able to travel, otherwise I promise to send a messenger —"

"— *if I am alive and able to travel, otherwise I promise to send a messenger* —"

Then Philip repeated the oath himself, with mock seriousness, and finished melodramatically:

"Signed and sealed," with that he kissed Dorothy, "in the presence of— what shall we do about witnesses?" he asked anxiously.

Dorothy looked over the parapet to the gardens below, and pointed to some Arabs in the distance.

"In the presence of three witnesses, who shall be nameless, on this, the fifteenth day of March, 189–."

Then he took Dorothy in his arms.

"Do you realize how serious this is, sweetheart?" he asked, dropping for a moment his frivolous mood. "You are under oath."

"And so are you, and we will keep it together," Dorothy answered. And Philip sat down beside her with a great weight in his heart, for he realized that there were many sad years for them before the keeping of the tryst — and Fate alone knew what lay beyond.

Finally Dorothy said, "Papa will be so glad, Philip, for he is very fond of you, and he said, only the other day when you were away, that he missed you dreadfully."

The shadow deepened on Philip's face, and he said softly, with a touch of sadness, "Let us keep the secret our very own for a few days, Dorothy, and not even let your father share it. I am jealous even of his sympathy."

Dorothy was quite willing to have a brief time to get used to her happiness, and acquiesced merrily.

"It will be good fun masquerading," she laughed. "No one will ever guess, I shall be so quiet and circumspect."

"Are you so good at acting, Dorothy?" Philip asked. "You make me almost afraid."

"I am a bit of a novice in this particular line," she answered gayly, "but I shall try and deceive people. Only," she added with mock mournfulness, "I know it will be hard to hide my joy, for I am sure my face fairly shines

with gladness. But any way," she finished mischievously, "no one will ever suspect you are the cause of it."

Philip groaned. "Am I such a fossil?" he asked with a degree of earnestness. "Doesn't my face shine, too, Dorothy?" He looked up at her as she stood beside him.

She studied him seriously. "Your eyes shine, Philip, when they meet mine, and your face glows, too, at times; but there are sad lines on it, dear, I would give worlds to efface." She brushed her hand lovingly across his forehead. "They are so deep I can't reach them."

"They mark the weary years of waiting before I met you, Dorothy," he said passionately. "They can't be erased at once; the years have been too many."

Dorothy stood looking over the tops of the trees to the city. Suddenly she shook herself, as if casting off an unpleasant thought, and spoke:

"Oh, by the way, Philip, since you have been gone I have grown very intimate with a woman who used to know you in New York."

She tried to speak indifferently, but her heart was beating hard against her ribs, and

she felt her voice must betray her, so intense was her desire to have him speak of his past. Until he told her frankly of his life, she could not feel utterly happy.

Philip smiled. "I wonder who she can be?" he asked.

"The Baroness von Hausheim," Dorothy answered. "I don't know her maiden name. She has been abroad a number of years, Philip, and has not heard of you lately; but I spoke of you the other day, and she said she used to know you."

Philip's face was puzzled and mildly interested. "I can't imagine who it can be," he repeated. "I don't remember that any one of the girls I knew married a foreigner. What is she like, Dorothy?"

"Oh, she is beautiful!" Dorothy said with enthusiasm. "The most beautiful woman I ever saw, I think. She is a close friend of Mrs. Westwood Lee; they have been in Cairo several winters together, for her husband was a major in the army, and while he was off in the interior, Mr. and Mrs. Lee stayed at her home on the Faubourg."

Philip worried his brain thinking who it might be, and finally gave it up in despair.

"I shall meet her sometime, Dorothy, and

then I shall know," he argued. "Let 's not spend our afternoon thinking of her."

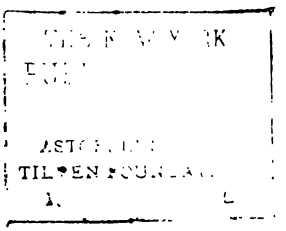
They changed the subject, and the Baroness was forgotten in the more vital things which concerned themselves. The afternoon waned, and they started to go down from the tower. When they reached the stairs, they heard voices below, evidently a pleasure party with the exploring fever. As the stairway was narrow, Dorothy and Philip waited for them to come up. The tourists were talking animatedly in French, and did not notice them till they reached them. Then Dorothy stepped forward and walked up to the only lady in the party. The others drew aside and looked at the view. The Baroness hardly seemed to see Dorothy, she was looking past her toward Philip.

"Who is he?" she asked breathlessly. Dorothy turned.

"It is Philip," she said. "Come here, Mr. Morrison, and meet the Baroness von Hausheim."

Philip bowed low over her extended hand. The blood fled from his face, leaving heavy gray shadows upon it. His eyes narrowed to two rapier points as he raised his head.

"This is a great surprise, Baroness," he



said, with intense bitterness, and then he turned to Dorothy. "Are you ready, Miss Dike?"

The Baroness recovered herself. "I shall see you some time to-morrow, dear," she said quietly to Dorothy. "How is Bobbie to-day?"

Dorothy answered at random and passed on. There was hardly a word spoken on the homeward drive. Philip looked as if he had seen a ghost, and sat staring straight before him. A blinding jealousy stifled Dorothy. Was his past so vivid and vital a thing after all these years that a woman who was associated with his wife's memory should be able to arouse such intense emotions? Dorothy bore the silence as long as she could, and then, under cover of the darkness, timidly slipped her hand into Philip's, and got her only comfort from the pain of his passionate clasp.

CHAPTER XIV

ONE flag, one land, one heart, one hand,
One Nation evermore!

O. W. HOLMES.

A WHOOP and a yell, the blowing of horns and the sound of merry voices, and Mr. Dike and Robert stepped on the porch just in time to see the coach dash past, gay with streaming ribbons and the bright dresses and parasols of the ladies. They had a glimpse of Dorothy's beaming face, as she turned and waved a bright scarf to them, and then the scene was over, and the people who had hurried out at the unusual noise wandered back to their several occupations.

It was a gay party, fourteen in all, and they were out for a holiday, bound for the Pyramids, and intent on making the most of the trip. Dorothy sat on the seat back of the driver, between Mr. Keith and an Englishman, Mr. Ellsley, whom she had just met. Philip was on the back seat with Miss Curtis.

The talk was general and gay. Now and then snatches of song would be started by one,

picked up by another, and as easily slip back into silence. Then stories were exchanged, with a merry laugh between them. Every one was in the best of spirits, and bound to enjoy the day to the full.

"One thing, girls," little Miss Curtis called from the back seat, "you want to be careful what you say to Mr. Keith, for I have found out that he sends everything he hears to some western paper; and some one said," she added with a laugh and coquettish glance at Mr. Keith, who had turned when she first spoke, "that he even has a way of divining your inmost thoughts and putting them on paper to give you cold shivers some day when by chance the paper falls into your hands."

"You want to be careful, Miss Curtis," Mr. Keith answered, as he made a pretence of putting her words down in his note-book, "that I don't divine yours; be sure when I write you up I 'll send you the paper."

Dorothy turned to him. "What a clever way of getting even with your enemies, Mr. Keith!" she said. "Just write them up with venom, and send them the paper."

"How peaceful the Nile looks to-day!" Mrs. Phillips remarked to no one in particular; and those nearest her turned to look at the

stretch of blue water which lay shimmering in the sun. They were crossing the Kasr-el-Nil, and the view up and down the river was picturesque enough with the winged dahabeahs here and there, trying to make a little headway with all sails set in the light breeze. One of Cook's steamers was coming down the river, looking aggressively incongruous among the oriental boats.

"Upon which steamer did you go?" Mrs. Phillips asked Dorothy. She was a pinched-looking little woman, with great regard for the formalities of life.

"I have n't been at all," she replied quietly. "It seems funny, does n't it?" she added. "But papa was not well, and we have been resting; perhaps even yet we may go."

"It seems a pity," Mr. Keith said, "not to go, when you can do the trip quite respectably in three weeks."

"But papa would never consent to go on a steamer," Dorothy replied. "He can't endure hurrying any way. If we go at all, it will be on a dahabeah, and you know that would take fully six weeks."

"Don't you think the trip would be very long and tedious on a dahabeah?" Mrs. Phillips asked. An unconfessed antagonism had

existed between Dorothy and Mrs. Phillips from their first meeting, and whenever it was possible Dorothy avoided having any conversation with her. To-day, however, she made up her mind that she would try to conquer the aversion she felt toward her, and so turned round with a friendly smile upon her lips:

"As far as I am concerned," she said, "I can fancy nothing more delightful. I have some friends who went up on the 'Isis' last winter, and their descriptions of the life are absolutely ideal."

"But the scenery and ruins are very similar, to the untrained eye, as one goes up the Nile, and six weeks among them must be monotonous, unless one is making a study of Egyptology," Mrs. Phillips replied. There was a little touch of finality about her remarks which woke the slumbering antagonism in Dorothy's breast. She was willing to be beaten in an argument, but she would not be vanquished unheard.

"My friends said not," she said quietly. "They said that no matter how listless and indifferent a person was to the ruins when starting upon the trip, it only took a short time for him to get imbued with the idea that there was nothing of greater importance in the world than the study of Egyptian cartouches

and architecture. 'And they spoke of the joy when letters would arrive, often in packages of ten or twelve, and keep them busy all the afternoon reading. Then, for excitement, they had the passing of the steamers, and they would all stand on sofas and chairs and wave the American flag; then other flags would appear on the boats, and their voices would all blend in three cheers for the red, white, and blue. You need to be away from your country to understand what the stars and stripes mean," and Dorothy gave a little sigh of appreciation.

Mrs. Phillips's face did not respond to Dorothy's patriotism.

"You mean they would wave to their friends," she corrected.

"Yes, if they happened to be there; but they always waved to every steamer that passed them. Some Americans were always ready to respond."

Mrs. Phillips straightened herself a little:

"But how did they know to whom they were waving?"

Dorothy turned and looked at Mrs. Phillips, wondering if she was trying to make trouble, or if she really did not understand.

"What do you mean?" she asked incredulously.

"Why," Mrs. Phillips said, "they could not be sure that every steamer would have their friends on board, and if strangers answered their salute, imagine how distressing it would be to them if they ever found it out!"

Dorothy could not believe she heard aright. "Do you mean," she asked in astonishment, "that it could possibly matter to my friend if she did wave to people whom she did not know, — send greeting across the river as between fellow-countrymen in a foreign land?"

Mrs. Phillips stared at Dorothy with well-bred despair, and Dorothy saw the narrowness of the woman's soul in her eyes.

"It is a perilous thing to do ordinarily, because there is quite a chance that one might meet the tourists on land, and then it would be extremely mortifying to remember that one had waved to complete strangers!"

"If they were well-bred," Dorothy said, with slight impatience, "they would never take advantage of it, and if they were not, they ought to be snubbed."

The conversation had interested the coachers, and they all sat listening, though nobody attempted to take any part in the discussion, and Dorothy felt a little bitterness toward Philip that he did not enter into it. It would have

been so easy for him to take her part, and his words would have had more weight with Mrs. Phillips than anything any one else might say; but he was utterly silent. Dorothy was angry with Mrs. Phillips, and she was vexed with herself to think she could have any feeling in her heart save disgust for such a display of snobbery. She meant to let the matter drop, but Mrs. Phillips was persistent; she turned to Mr. Ellsley.

"Surely, Mr. Ellsley," she said, smiling, though she was full of determination to prove Dorothy in the wrong, "you understand, being an Englishman, how a person naturally conservative would shrink from such an exhibition?"

Mr. Ellsley had seen Dorothy's flushed face and suppressed excitement, and was not averse to giving the woman who had caused them a bit of a lesson.

"Well, Mrs. Phillips," he answered, "I suppose, since I am an Englishman, I ought to bear out the reputation of being conservative; but, if you will pardon me, I must say I don't see how it could contaminate a person to send a greeting across a river, even to utter strangers, and if I had been there, I probably should have been one of the first to wave the flag — if it

had been the flag of England," he said, with a smile and twinkle at Dorothy.

After Mr. Ellsley's remark, there was an oppressive silence. "Finished, Helas," Mr. Keith said under his breath to Dorothy, in the vernacular of the country. Then Miss Curtis, on the back seat, said something irrelevant about the view, but, not being noticed, she lapsed into silence. Then everybody began to speak at once, but it was not until they all dismounted at the Mena House that the conversation became at all natural; then, by mutual consent, there was a move in the direction of the Pyramids.

"To see the sun set and the moon rise," they said in a breath.

Mr. Keith walked by Dorothy's side over the soft sand. She liked him more than ever, he was so cheerful in his views of things.

"Does it still seem strange to you to be here, Mr. Keith, or are you acclimated?"

"No," he said, laughing. "I have to pinch myself often to make myself believe I 'm not dreaming. To really stand under the shadow of the Pyramids!" he added. "Impossible!" and he stood still and looked at the enormous monuments in front of them.

"You are the most refreshing man I know," Dorothy said enthusiastically. "After I have been in Mrs. Phillips's atmosphere five minutes I feel suffocated and unhappy, and no one can bring me out of the slough so quickly as you."

Mr. Keith turned toward her with words coming thick and fast to his lips; but the frank friendship he read in her eyes silenced the sudden hope her words had awakened. He bit his lip, and walked on in silence.

"Her horizon is about as big as a bushel-basket," she went on, absorbed in her subject; "and her life is made up of the effort to quench all natural emotions, and the attempt to exercise a lynx-eyed vigilance toward the people she meets, lest some from the outer circle shall enter the holy of holies of her acquaintance. What do you suppose she asked Mrs. Lee about me?" she inquired, laughing at the recollection. "This was after she had met me several times at large affairs — if the best people (presumably the swells) were taking me up? I was so amused when Mrs. Lee told me; and all her enmity toward me, I am certain, lies in the fact that the Baroness and I are such good friends. Like all Anglomaniacs, she adores a title."

They had come to the Pyramids and verged off to the right, sitting on some rocks near the western base of Cheops, while the others went to the Sphinx, or began the ascent of the Pyramids, as the spirit moved them.

"Why Americans want to ape the English, I could never understand," Dorothy went on grumblingly, speaking the thoughts which Mrs. Phillips's attitude had aroused. Then she lifted her head with a gesture of dismissal, while she said, with a little spurt of patriotism, "I love my country, every rock and tree upon it, and I glory in the fact that I am an American, stamped with the seal of freedom and progress. New, democratic, vulgar, if you will — but American from the top of my head to the soles of my feet."

Dorothy stuck her feet out in front of her, and surveyed the heavy russia shoes critically. The gesture was unconscious, and her face had no suggestion of levity in it. The man beside her smiled slightly:

"Yes, the shoes have the American stamp upon them, Miss Dike; but the hat, — I 'm afraid that is *Parisienne, n'est-ce pas?*"

Dorothy took it from her head, and looked at it with a funny little expression, almost of annoyance, upon her face.

"Yes, it is Parisian," she said regretfully, "but I had to take it; I could not go bare-headed." She laughed. "And it was pretty," she added reluctantly, surveying it with contemplative eyes.

Mr. Keith looked from it to the ruffled hair, left free to the will of the soft wind, and rose suddenly to his feet.

"If you don't mind sitting here," he said abruptly, "I 'll make a bluff at climbing old Cheops. Will you wait?" he asked without looking at her.

Dorothy acquiesced, and he took off his coat and hat, throwing them beside her upon the rocks.

"I will wave from the top," he called back as he started off.

Dorothy was glad to be alone to enjoy the soft night air, and sit in the glowing light of the setting sun. Where was Philip?—she wondered, and why had he not walked with her to the Pyramids? It was almost as if he avoided her. Could it be that this was the outcome of his suggestion that they keep their love a secret from the rest of the world, or was it because the terrible pages of his past had been turned back and had made him forget her? She thought of their drive home after Philip

met the Baroness, of the stern, hard profile and intense silence, of the painful grasp of the hand which stole into his, and the almost cruel roughness with which he pushed it aside afterwards. No, no, she would imagine no sorrows. She had given her faith to Philip, and nothing except his own word should shatter it. If the past was to rise a hideous spectre on occasion, she would force herself to bear it, and learn to help him by effacing herself. She would take the love he gave her, and strive to be content. She heard a cry, and, looking up, saw Mr. Keith waving from the top of the Pyramid. She shook her scarf in response, and watched him as he made his descent. As he leapt from one rock to another with the agility of an Arab, she remembered he had told her he was fond of athletics, and had spent several summers in Switzerland, tramping through the Alps. What a sunny, happy temperament he had! Had there never been anything but sunshine in his life? — she wondered. When he reached her, it was time to return to the Mena House. They found the others there before them, and Dorothy looked for Philip. He was nowhere to be found, and, later, she heard pretty Miss Curtis tell Mr. Ellsley that he had gone with her to the Sphinx when

they all started off; but had been so stupid that she had left him alone, and joined the rest of the party. If Mr. Ellsley was anxious to find him, he was doubtless there, gazing at the Sphinx yet.

CHAPTER XV

THE thorns which I have reaped are of the tree
I planted — they have torn me — and I bleed,
I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed.
BYRON. *Childe Harold.*

WHEN Philip started out with the party, Miss Curtis tripped along beside him through the sandy soil, chattering frivolously in her irresponsible way, asking questions and answering them in a breath, flitting from one subject to another with a facility which would bewilder the most willing listener, and Philip, from at first attempting a degree of interest in her conversation, had yielded to the power of his own thoughts, and gradually forgotten even her presence beside him. For a while she rattled on, regardless of his abstraction, but finally she said abruptly:

"You are not hearing a word I say," and Philip apologized profoundly for his inattention, and attempted to follow her, with no better success than before, and she finally left him in disgust. Her presence had meant so little to Philip that he hardly realized when

she went, and he sat in the soft sand, facing the open desert and the setting sun.

How full of Dorothy every bit of Egypt was! Across the desert they had ridden centuries before, when they first knew each other, and he had felt then that irresistible longing to be with her, to learn to the limit her personality, and — ah, yes, even in those early days — to win her love. The same sand had hidden them in its pitiless density, and nearly ended their lives. That was before he had lied to her, when their intercourse was simply marked by friendship — "on her side," he thought. "I have always loved her. She has always been my ideal woman. Years before — before I ever met her, she was there waiting. If I had only known!"

He looked down the vista of his four and thirty years with brave directness, and faced the wretchedness in them. He had made a failure of his life, — a complete and utter failure. He thought of the ambitions he had had, the future he had planned to make for himself, the position he had meant to hold among men, and the reality brought a flush of shame to his cheek. He had failed for himself, but he alone had suffered before; he had never committed a crime until now. He had won Dorothy's love

under false pretences; he had told her his life-history as the story of another man, and she had passed judgment upon it; and yet, in the face of her disapproval, he had withheld his identity from her, knowing, if he should confess it, the knowledge would separate them. He had looked into the clear, faithful, honest eyes, and lied to her. There was no forgiveness possible for such a sin as his. He had told her he was a Fatalist, that he believed his life was planned and directed by an all-powerful hand, and that he was unable to strive against it. Had he lied in that as in the other things? He knew he had made a mad fight against everything honorable in order to win her. Had he been honest in nothing?—he moaned. Yes—in one thing—in his love for her. He knew that no matter how she suffered in the separation, her agony could not equal his.

He heard the merry voices of the coaching party, and saw them returning to the Mena House, and still he sat, his head buried in his knees, his soul writhing within him. What was to be done?—he thought. He must see Renée, and talk with her. He hardly knew why he should see her, and yet he felt he must say a few things. Then he would confess to Dorothy, tell her the wretched story was his own,

and leave her forever — bury himself in the outermost parts of the world, where he could forget even his own name. If he should kill himself! For a space he let his mind dwell upon it. There was a curious seductiveness about the thought, and his storm-tossed soul craved the peaceful harbor of oblivion, or if

> "to die
> Is to begin to live — Is to end
> An old stale weary work and to commence
> A newer and a better — "

then, ho, for that good country! His work had been bad enough here, why not drop it altogether and begin anew in another sphere — and leave the brunt of the battle to the two women; the woman who had wronged him, and the one whom he had wronged. A great loathing of himself surged over him like the rush of the incoming tide. How far he had fallen that he could harbor for a moment this question of suicide! He had always prided himself upon his strength to bear, without complaining, the vagaries of the "God of Things," and now he was throwing off the armor of years, and confessing to the heart of a coward. Enough, enough! He would still defy Fate, and, baring his breast to the arrows

of his vengeance, greet him with courageous lips. Despair might fill his heart and crush all hope from his life, but he would not hide like a craven behind the skirts of Death.

Out of the twilight came the murmur of the voices of the Arab beggars abandoning the desert, and Philip listened dully to the ever softening sounds, until his thoughts dropped back to the mournful reveries again.

How could he help Dorothy! These mock heroics served him very well, but they could not help her. Because of these few weeks of fellowship, her life was destined to be robbed of all its sunshine.

Was their separation inevitable? For an instant, a wild hope forced itself upon him that perhaps he could win her over to a belief in divorce, and yet he almost felt that something would be lost from the beauty of their love, if he could shake her life-principles by his arguments. No, he could not do it if he tried; she was rooted and grounded in her religion, and nothing could weaken her faith in any of its doctrines. The decree had gone forth; it was only another arrow from the quiver of Fate, destined always to wound, but never to kill. He was scarred with the marks of them, and this last had hit deepest.

But Dorothy — Fate could separate them, had separated them already in his consciousness. Whatever came now must be a sort of anti-climax; for, from the time he met Renée in the tower, Dorothy had receded into the background, growing more and more beautiful to him as she slipped from him, hopelessly farther and farther away. What he held of her now he would always hold, — her memory of their companionship.

"That will come to her till life ends," he thought with torturing exaltation, "on the breath of the orange blossoms, the murmur of the twilight breeze, in the silent watches of the night. Three months of all her life — these were his, invulnerable to the fury of Fate."

His head dropped upon his knees once more, hiding his tearless eyes in the darkness of his folded arms, and the bitter, dull pain in his heart was the only vital thing to him. Suddenly something seemed to be falling upon him, — a heavy, intangible oppression enveloped him; he stirred and raised his head. A fierce, revengeful face rose out of the half-light, and black, murderous eyes looked into his. Philip had an indistinct impression that he had seen it somewhere before. The dying light flashed upon a blade of steel raised above his head, and

the desire to live surged into his consciousness. He put up his hand to ward off the blow, and the blade went through it. The pain infuriated him. With a bound, he rose to his feet and grappled with the man before him. For a few moments they wrestled in the sand, and then Philip threw him violently, and rose towering above him.

He stood silently regarding the heap at his feet until the same impression of familiarity flashed upon him, and then he bent down and turned the man over till he saw his face.

"So, my friend of the Muskee," he said with a sneer, "you have been biding your time. A knife in the back — it was worthy of you." He straightened himself, and took his handkerchief, tying it tight about the wrist of his wounded hand.

"You will have to try again, my friend," he said wearily, as he tightened the knot with his teeth.

He groped and picked up the dagger, wiping the blade in the sand. "I shall keep this as a memento," he said quietly, — "a memento of various things," and then, turning, he walked slowly toward the Mena House.

The others were at dinner when he appeared, looking pale and weary, his left hand in the

pocket of his short coat. He slipped quietly into the seat which was reserved for him. It was on the same side with Dorothy, further down, and she could not see him. She was in excellent spirits, and kept her end of the table ringing with laughter and fun. Even Mrs. Phillips warmed up after a while, and entered into the spirit of the occasion. As the men waited while the ladies adjourned to the drawing-room, Dorothy had to pass where Philip was standing. He leaned toward her as if to speak; but, as she raised her eyes to his, his dropped, and he stepped back a little, and made a pretence of moving the chair, that she might pass more easily.

"I beg pardon," he said.

There was little talk on the drive home. Every one was tired out with the day's excursion, and seemed to have only spirit left for singing. The air rang with their songs, and as they passed through the streets, here and there doors would open to reveal sleepy heads peering out into the darkness, curious to know what was going on.

At Shepheard's it was dark and quiet. In order to let Dorothy pass, Philip had to get down from the coach, and Dorothy thought that perhaps he would walk to the door with

her. He stood with his hat in his hand, and helped her alight.

"I hope you have enjoyed the day," he said courteously, as she stepped to the pavement.

"It has been perfectly delightful," Dorothy replied, while she struggled to force the tears back. Then her eyes fell upon the bandaged hand which held his hat, and flashed back to his face, shining white in the dim light.

"You are hurt," she exclaimed. "What have you done to your hand?"

Philip hastily shifted his hat, and put his hand in his pocket.

"It is nothing," he said hurriedly. "Your father is waiting," and Dorothy ran up the steps. She threw herself upon the bed without even removing her hat, and broke into a passion of weeping. It had been a miserable day, and she had expected so much! And yet, in her wretchedness, she had little time for self-pity. Philip suffered, and she must be brave and steadfast when he came back to her again. The white face she had just parted from passed through her memory, and the bound hand turned her thoughts. What had he done? — she wondered. He must be seriously hurt to have his hand so bandaged. Perhaps he was suffering physical as well as mental pain,

and Dorothy wept afresh. Then the misunderstanding arose in her heart and wiped out every other feeling, — this horrible, intangible something which rose like a wall between them. Their love, which a few days before had been so full of promise and beauty, now must always be shadowed with the deep, tragic influence of his past. She felt as she might feel if he were subject to fits of insanity: it was horrible, but it must be borne; and the motherliness in Dorothy's nature rose, strong and determined in his need. She would devote her whole life to driving this shadow out of his, and perhaps, some time, happiness might rise Phœnix-like from the ashes of the past.

CHAPTER XVI

I KNEW you once ; but in Paradise,
If we meet, I will pass nor turn my face.
R. BROWNING.

ALL night Philip lay in misery. His hand pained him intensely, and was enough in itself to have kept sleep from his eyes ; but, added to his mental worry, the pain became well-nigh unbearable. He would walk the floor until exhausted, and then he would throw himself on the bed, and fall into a restless slumber, only to wake covered with a cold perspiration, and haunted by some ill-defined horror. Dorothy and the Baroness were curiously blended in his dreams, and he would rescue Dorothy from the Muskee Arab, who hung over her threateningly with a dagger in his hand, only to find that he held Renée in his arms. The dreams were so frightful that he would stay awake as long as he could, from horror of a repetition of them. But he was very weak, and seemed to have lost all control of himself. His wound had bled profusely, while he had been wrestling with the Arab, and

he felt that all the rest of the blood in his body had gone to his head. It throbbed incessantly, and sounded like a mammoth clock ticking in his brain.

He rang for his coffee early, and then felt so exhausted that he told the porter to send for Dr. Eisenbach. In the course of an hour the doctor arrived, swinging into Philip's room with the distinctive bluster of his six good feet of German strength and buoyancy. The doctor had a round, jolly Dutch countenance, lips ever ready to part in a smile of good comradeship, eyes mirroring a soul whose philosophy of cheerfulness refused to be crushed out by the misery of the world, even though his experience with that misery made up the greatest part of his life, and a knowledge of therapeutics unsurpassed in his profession.

He sung out a sprightly "Good-morning," as he laid his hat and cane upon the table, and drew off his gloves. Then he carefully examined Philip's hand through a mammoth pair of gold-bowed glasses which he put on and fastened behind his ears.

Philip had gone at once to the doctor at the Mena House when he left the Arab on the desert, and had had his hand bandaged temporarily, intending, as the doctor did not

have the proper antiseptics, to go to Dr. Eisenbach upon arriving at Cairo; but it was so late when he reached the city that he was quite worn out, and had gone immediately to his room, where he had spent long hours alternating between chills and high fever, and when Dr. Eisenbach arrived he found a very troublesome wound.

The hand and arm were badly swollen, and the edges of the wound were puffed and purple, and the doctor's jolly face grew grave.

"You should have come to me last night," he said seriously, as he poured some carbolic acid into a bowl of water.

"What is it?" Philip asked. "Septicæmia?"

"I shall try to prevent it," the doctor answered; "but I shall have to remove some portions of the flesh. The operation will be painful — do you want to take ether?"

Philip smiled grimly, and lifted his hand from the basin, holding it toward the doctor. "I guess I can stand it," he said quietly, and the doctor began to treat it.

For some minutes there was silence in the room. Philip's teeth were shut; but no sound escaped them, and his eyes were fastened upon the doctor's fingers as he deftly dressed the

wound. Then Dr. Eisenbach gave him some whiskey and quinine, with orders to repeat the dose at regular intervals, and picked up his gloves and cane:

"Don't go out," he said earnestly. "You must keep quiet for several days. Your hand is in a serious condition. I will come in again toward night." And then, with a smiling word of encouragement, he left him. Philip threw himself on the bed after the doctor disappeared, and tossed restlessly from side to side.

In the course of the forenoon a note was brought to Philip from the Baroness von Hausheim asking for an interview that morning. Philip looked at her signature, "Renée von Hausheim," and his lips drooped contemptuously. "She aimed high," he said bitterly, "but if one is making a name to order, it is quite as well to have a title, I suppose." Then he rose, and, after laboriously dressing, drove to her house.

He was conducted into the luxurious Eastern morning-room, and sat down to await her coming. Philip watched the portières through which she would enter with intense dread. What he would say to her, or she to him, he could only wonder. He felt that it would need desperate control to keep his resentment

within bounds; but he had already declared to himself that he would not say one word of harshness.

The portières swayed, and the Baroness came through, and Philip faced her for the second time in seven years. For a moment they studied each other in silence; of the two, the woman was the less calm.

"I shall not offer my hand, Philip, for I know you would refuse to take it," she said with an effort at composure. "I should not like that at all. Will you sit down?"

Philip sat near the table, and rested his elbow upon it, shading his eyes with his unbandaged hand.

"You sent for me, Baroness," he said coldly. "Have you something to say to me?"

The Baroness paled slightly and her hands tightened on the arms of the chair in which she sat.

"I have a great deal to say to you, Philip; but it is very hard — to do it." Her fingers moved nervously over the polished wood, and then she spoke very quickly, without looking at him: "When I wrote you that I was not lost on the 'Elbe,' I felt you should know it, but I never dreamed that we should meet again. I ought to have left Cairo when Dor — when I

heard you were in Egypt; but a great curiosity kept me here, and I — wanted to see you again, though I did not expect to speak to you, but after our meeting in the tower it seemed best that a few words should be said between us."

She glanced at Philip, but he was not looking at her, and she spoke again:

"I went at once to Germany when — I left you, Philip."

He stirred impatiently in his chair.

"These details you don't like, I know, but I feel they are necessary, and I would appreciate it if you would listen to what I have to say. I went to Germany and into the little pension where Aunt and I had stayed before going to America, when she took me from the convent in Paris. I had very little money — I could not touch that which you gave the bankers for me, and through the American consul I got a place in the house of the Baron —"

Philip looked up indignantly.

"We will not speak of the Baron, Renée," he broke in sharply. "Your ruse in regard to your — ah — marriage may deceive others, but you can't expect me to believe it."

Her eyes flashed wrathfully.

"Ruse!" she interrupted. "But I—"

"Kindly confine yourself to the truth,"

Philip said cruelly, "or you will force me to be rude and refuse to listen."

The Baroness's look of indignation changed to one of incredulity, and she gazed intently at Philip for a long minute without speaking. Did he believe the worst of her, or did he think she had taken a fictitious name in order to help her position? It mattered little, any way, she had not brought him here to defend herself.

"As you like," she said quietly, and then, — "The ruse has served me well, at all events."

Philip rose.

"Is this all you have to say to me, Baroness?" he asked sternly.

She rose too and took a step toward him and held out her hand. Her eyes were bright and tender, and her lips were quivering, in spite of herself.

"This is not all, Philip," she said. "I want you to forgive me for all my part in your life." Her hand was still outstretched, but she dropped it at her side as Philip turned from her.

"You ask a great deal," he said bitterly. "It is difficult for a man to forgive the woman who has wrecked his life and killed his youth. During these seven years, while you

have forgotten, and have satisfied your ambition, what do you suppose my life has been? Shall I tell you? A hell — a constant struggle to learn to forget, to crush out all my emotions and accept life without a gleam of beauty in it. You killed my ambition, destroyed my faith, and ruined my life — and yet you ask me to forgive you! Only a woman would dare such a thing."

The Baroness raised her head.

"You are very hasty in your conclusions, Philip. Do you think I have had so little unhappiness that I cannot understand how great a thing I ask?"

Philip smiled grimly.

"I forgot the death of the Baron," he said.

"Philip, you are cruel!" It was almost a cry.

"You are hardly the one to taunt me with that," Philip answered.

The Baroness walked across the room, and stood looking out of the window. In the road two water-carriers were sprinkling the parched street, and the Baroness stood a moment watching with dull eyes the clouds of dust rise from the ground under the disturbing influence of the drops of water which the men forced from the pig-skins under their arms. The carriers passed on down the street, and Renée turned again to

Philip. Her cheeks were wet, and her voice trembled. She went up behind him, and put her hands on the back of his chair.

"Philip," she said gently, "you feel that you have suffered alone all these years, and that I have gone free; but you know nothing of what I have been through. Philip, listen! There has never been a moment when I saw one ray of happiness before me. I have borne not only my own sorrow, but yours. Every pain you have endured, has fallen a thousand times more heavily on me. I had all the remorse for my conduct — besides the loss." She faltered, and then forced herself to go on: "Philip, my lot has not been an easy one. Don't you think I deserve some pity?"

Philip sat motionless, his head resting against the high-backed chair. The Baroness put her hand out to caress his hair, but before touching it the fingers curled upon the palm, and the close-shut fist dropped to her side, while she drew in a deep breath and closed her eyes. The clock ticking on the mantel marked the throbbing stillness.

"Come, Philip, this is not like you," the Baroness said, with assumed lightness, walking round in front of him. "Can't you find one spark of tenderness beneath all this harsh-

ness with which to give me what I ask?" Her voice dropped, and there was a sound of tears in it. "Philip, it means a great deal to me."

Philip rose and stood beside her. "Renée, I can't forgive you. I can't so easily blot out all these years of blinding misery. I can't forget the man I was, and the lost illusions and hopes; and" — his eyes rested upon her with hopeless misery — "I can't forget that because of you I must bring suffering upon the girl I love, — the girl who has brought me back to light again out of a darkness deeper than death. No, I can't forgive you!" he said passionately, burying his face in his hands, and dropping into a chair. "I can't! I can't!"

The Baroness's eyes enveloped the bowed figure before her. The lenses of her brain were photographing a picture she would never be able to forget. Twice she tried to speak, but the words caught in her throat. She put her hand on the mantel to steady herself, and shut her eyes, for a numbing darkness was shutting down upon her.

"You mean Dorothy?" she heard this question dully, as if asked by some one else. The man before her lifted his head. A gray veil seemed to have fallen over his face, making him look ill and old. She scrutinized the fea-

tures she had known so well, searching for one memory of the love he had given her in the old days; but she found not even a look of recognition, so utterly had she been forgotten in his thought of Dorothy. Her face grew sad and compassionate, and the beautiful eyes rested upon him with infinite tenderness.

"You love Dorothy, Philip?" the Baroness asked again.

"Yes," Philip answered miserably; "and, God help us both, she has given me her love in return."

The Baroness's hand dropped involuntarily to the table. Her fingers closed upon a little book which was lying there, and she opened it absently before she spoke again. The torn edges where two pages had been taken out, held her attention for a moment. A sunny, girlish face rose from the mutilated leaves, and two innocent brown eyes looked lovingly into hers. She closed the book softly, and put it again on the table.

"It can make no difference to you, Philip," she said quietly. "She does not know who I am, and your wife is dead to the world. You are free."

"And do you think I would marry her with a lie on my conscience, Renée?"

The Baroness hesitated a moment before speaking, looking at him intently; then she turned a bit away from him. "But there is such a thing as divorce," she said with timorous interrogation. Her teeth shut upon the hand she pressed to her lips.

"Divorce means nothing to her, Renée. She is a firm Catholic, and believes that nothing but death dissolves the marriage bond. There is nothing to do but leave her, and wreck her life. There is no happiness anywhere for us."

The Baroness stretched her hands toward him. Dorothy's face, with the tender, pleading eyes, faded entirely from her thoughts, — one beautiful, bewildering possibility flashed before her.

"Could n't you find the old happiness, if you tried, Philip? You loved me once, and we have both suffered."

Philip waited a moment, reflecting, and there was almost a tone of regret in his voice as he answered her:

"The time is past for that, Renée — the old life is dead forever for me. It is as if — the old Philip had died eight years ago — " he paused a moment, and then went on with unwitting cruelty, "Renée, I have spent all these years trying to forget my old life, and the

part you played in it, and to-day, as I see you, I cannot find in my heart one particle of tenderness for you. Our ways must forever lie apart."

The Baroness recoiled as if he had struck her.

"No pity — no forgiveness, Philip?" she said heavily. "Is there no atonement possible?"

Philip put his hands over his eyes for a moment, and then started toward the hall. At the door he paused. Dorothy stood upon the threshold, her face white and resolute, her head high, and her eyes burning dark and uncomprehending under the shadow of her hat.

For a moment the three faced each other. The Baroness was the first to recover herself. She walked unsteadily toward Dorothy, and said with affected lightness of manner which deceived no one:

"You see, Dorothy, Mr. Morrison and I discovered that we knew each other. We have been renewing an old friendship."

Dorothy looked from the Baroness, who was slowly becoming mistress of herself, to Philip, who stood immovable at the door, and stifled a cry.

"I would better go," she said chokingly, and walked out of the house.

CHAPTER XVII

"ALAS!" the voice returned, "'t is thou art blind
Not I unmerciful."

J. R. LOWELL.

DOROTHY drove back to Shepheard's, shadowed by a sense of impending catastrophe. Her thoughts were running riot through her brain. The Baroness's voice, thrilling with emotion, rang clamorously in her ears, "No forgiveness, Philip? Is there no atonement possible?" And then the picture as she entered the room, — the Baroness with hands outstretched and face wet with tears, and Philip looking as if he had heard his death-knell. She passed the ordeal of lunch, and then told her father if he would take Bobbie out, she would drive to Old Cairo to get the air, as her head ached. She drove to the Mosque, and ordered the man to wait for her. Into the deserted building she went alone, and the utter silence of the immense hall was like a balm to her crazed brain. That had been one of their old drives, and she knew every bit of it by heart. She could not keep

still; she felt she must walk, walk, walk, and back and forth in the empty hall she tramped, in utter silence, save for her footsteps on the hard floor. From behind one of the pillars Philip watched the pathetic figure walking up and down, and every click of the little heel seemed to smite his heart. He had gone to Shepheard's to see her, and her father had told him where she was. To the old Mosque he had followed, and now stood helpless, watching her. Suddenly she turned and met his eyes. She did not seem surprised to see him there, but went toward him unhesitatingly:

"Philip, what is it?" she asked, and her voice had command as well as question in it.

"My poor Dorothy!" Philip murmured brokenly, and led her to a pile of boards where they had often sat together. Her eyes, full of questioning apprehension, never left his face. He caught her hands in his, and bowed his head upon them. For an instant no word was spoken; then he raised his head and faced her, still holding her hands and looking into her eyes:

"Dorothy, look at me! Do you believe that I love you more than anything else in the world?"

Dorothy looked silently into his face, and

the despair in hers wrenched a cry from his lips.

"You don't doubt that, Dorothy?"

Dorothy's voice shook as she answered:

"How do I know, Philip?"

"Know, Dorothy!" he burst out reproachfully. "Know!" And then her spent face silenced him, for upon it he read something which before had not occurred to him, a suspicion, which, proven a certainty, is the one unforgivable thing in a woman's eyes. He dropped her hands and turned from her.

"How should you know?" he said bitterly. "You are justified in condemning me unheard," and the morning's tableau flashed through his mind, stinging in its criminations; but he shut it out angrily. She must be made to believe in the sincerity of his love, even in the face of such damning evidence, for upon that belief rested his entire hope of her forgiveness. He turned toward her, and went on vehemently:

"You must believe this, Dorothy. I love you passionately, entirely. Look in my eyes." He dropped on his knees beside her, and brought his face on a level with hers. "Don't you read love, love, love? They don't lie, Dorothy. In that I have been honest with you."

"Honest?" she repeated inertly.

"Yes," Philip answered. "In many ways I have deceived you, Dorothy; but I was honest in that, God knows. But, Dorothy, I should not have tried to win your love, for there is a dark story in my life that I have withheld."

Philip was looking despairingly at Dorothy, and was surprised at an expression akin to thankfulness he saw in her face. The tears rushed to her eyes, and she put her hands upon his cheeks.

"Oh, Philip! I have been so jealous of this past, and so longed to have you speak of it to me! I can bear anything that I understand better than this undefinable something which separates us."

Philip rose and sat beside her, covering her hand with his own while he went on:

"Of course you did not know that I had been married, Dorothy. At first I did not tell you, because I never speak of it; it is all too painful to me, and afterward, when I learned to know you better, I could not bring myself to the point of confessing. I was a coward, Dorothy, for I feared I might lose you, if you knew, and I could not face that possibility; but I should have told you, dear, for the

whole structure of our love has been built upon a false foundation."

"Not quite all, Philip," Dorothy answered softly, "for I have known it for some time."

Philip looked at her in amazement.

"Who told you?" he cried.

"The Baroness von Hausheim," she answered.

Philip started. "The Baroness, Dorothy? What did she say?"

"She told me that you had been married, and had had a very unhappy, tragic life, and that—" Dorothy's voice dropped to a whisper—"your—wife was lost on the 'Elbe.'" Philip rose and took a step from Dorothy, and she sprang toward him, half sobbing:

"And, oh, Philip! Don't tell me any more, I can't bear it. If you told me you still loved her, I should die. I have suffered so these last days. I have forced myself to think of your wife, and your life with her, and tried so hard to get used to having you still bound to the past; but I am jealous and wretched. I don't care what your past is, Philip, if you will only forget it, and let me be everything to you. You said a moment ago that you loved me. Oh, Philip, don't you love me enough to forget this dreary part of your life?" Philip stood

motionless, and Dorothy turned away: "Oh! Is this past so frightful that it is going to kill all the happiness in our lives?"

"The Baroness told you too much or too little, Dorothy," Philip said presently. "She should have given you the whole of the story or none. What I told you at the Shubra Palace was not my friend's life, Dorothy, but my own. The woman who was my wife still lives."

A stifling, deadly blackness shut down before Dorothy's eyes, and she lost consciousness. When she came to herself, Philip's arms were about her, and her head was on his breast. She gave a little shiver of content, and then the reality burst upon her. She rose painfully:

"You must leave me, Philip," she said. Philip forced her to look at him:

"Dorothy, do you know what you are saying? You love me, and you are sending me away. Why do you do that, Dorothy? Can't you find a little mercy for me?"

Dorothy pressed her hands upon her brows as if to clear her brain.

"There is no mercy anywhere for us, Philip. She is your wife — your wife," she whispered with parched lips.

"She is my wife only in name, Dorothy.

She left me and came abroad without the slightest reason, so far as I could see. I thought she was happy with me; but one night I went home and found my house desolate, and only a letter telling me she had gone, and for years I never saw her. Surely, dear, I am bound in no way to her."

"She is still your wife, Philip," Dorothy said unwaveringly.

"Dorothy, can't you see?" Philip said. "Must I suffer more after all these years of wretchedness? Oh, child! I have lived through a lifetime of bitterness since she left me, trying to forget. Will you crush out this chance of happiness, and send me back into the misery again?"

Dorothy hardly seemed to hear him, and he laid his hand upon her shoulder to command her attention. She caught it in a passion of tenderness, and pressed it to her lips again and again. Then she burst into tears, and threw her arms around his neck, burying her head upon his breast:

"Oh, Philip, how can I give you up? How can I give you up?" she asked over and over. He held her gently in his arms, comforting her as he would have a troubled child, hardly conscious of her presence, for his eyes were

staring over her head even as he caressed her hair, while he struggled to collect his arguments for a final plea. When she grew more quiet, he lifted her face to his:

"Dorothy, this is something we must not decide hastily, for the decision is to affect our whole lives. Will you listen to what I have to say, and try to comprehend how I feel in regard to this?"

He led her back to the boards, and sat down beside her. Then he spoke calmly, with simple directness:

"You have been brought up very strictly, and the very severity of your judgments I love; but I don't think that they are always quite fair. The woman who was my wife has been so out of my life these years that I have felt almost as if she had died, as far as ever meeting her again is concerned, and she wanted to be dead to me, or she would never have left me as she did. There is no justice in a law which would bind us after all these years, Dorothy. In a number of states in America I could obtain a divorce" — Dorothy shuddered at the word — "on the ground of desertion, and be free again. I am not afraid to face God with this on my conscience, for before Him I cannot feel that this is wrong."

Dorothy sat silent and apathetic, and Philip leaned forward and touched her listless fingers.

"Can't you see this, Dorothy?" he asked tenderly.

"I can see what you mean, Philip, but we start from entirely different standpoints. You believe in divorce, and I do not. It is a strong doctrine of our church. You look upon marriage as a legal contract, while to us it is a religious obligation, and absolutely indissoluble."

"You speak of it as a religious obligation, Dorothy, and yet three thousand years ago Moses made a law in regard to divorce, and in every age and every country there have been certain laws governing it."

"And yet Christ did not sanction the law of Moses, for he said, 'Whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.'"

Philip answered quickly, "Yes, dear, but even He specified certain grounds whereon separation should be allowed."

"Separation, yes," Dorothy answered; "but never with the right to re-marry. Surely you must know what He said in regard to re-marriage?"

There was an ominous silence. Then Philip spoke:

"There have been great and good men in every age who have seen the wisdom of divorce for certain reasons, Dorothy. You admit that separation is right and just; that two people should not be forced to live together if they are utterly incompatible, because the marriage service has been said over them. Then why are you so severe upon the subject of utter divorce?"

"Simply, Philip, because divorce grants the right to re-marry, and I do not believe in that."

"Yet if either person dies, you grant the survivor that right?"

"Yes, but don't you see? We cannot control death, and we can control divorce; besides, we don't object to re-marriage in itself, it is because re-marriage is often a chief inducement to divorce. Any burdens from which we are offered release become unbearable; while, if no escape were possible, we would straighten our shoulders to carry them."

"But, Dorothy, don't you see what a tremendous field of argument you open up, when you talk this way? Take it in the lower classes, where the chief delights of life are found in the bodily comforts of the family. A girl marries a man who is a scoundrel, and he mal-treats

her, and abuses her in every way. You grant her a separation, — the right merely to live away from him. Must she be always deprived of the joys of home and family — condemned through one mistake to give up everything which makes life worth living? Don't you see what horrible temptations are open to a girl under these circumstances? You send her out into the world, married but with none of the protections of the marriage bond, financial or otherwise. Deprived of the legitimate right of marrying, to what depths may she not fall if she comes some time to love another man?"

"But, Philip, that is an individual case. Laws are founded upon the principle of the greatest good to the greatest number. We cannot help it if there is some suffering."

"But I claim the greatest good does not come through refusing absolute divorce. You send two people into the world by separation, not merely to suffer themselves, but they must bring misery upon other people with whom they come in contact. They will perhaps love again, and the innocent ones who love them are made to suffer unjustifiably."

"They should avoid that as far as possible, of course, Philip; but even then there would be less harm than if divorce were made easy,

and re-marriage possible. Whatever tends to weaken the sacredness of the marriage bond is degrading and sinful. Make the family ties less strong and binding, and you weaken the foundations of the state. Rome was built on the family principle, and when this safeguard was broken down, Rome fell. It is imperative that some innocent ones should suffer; there have always been martyrs to every righteous cause." Philip had attacked Dorothy on one of the strong doctrines of her church, and, in her effort to defend her beliefs, she had risen above the personal side of the argument into abstract discussion, but suddenly the realization of what her judgment meant to her flashed upon her, and her voice quivered, her eyes grew bright with unshed tears, and she turned to Philip sadly:

"You see, dear, it is useless to argue. There is no question of right, — it is all wrong."

Philip felt the hopelessness of further discussion. The arguments which he claimed to be irrefutable, she had answered with ones just as strong on the other side, and met Philip on his own ground. She had her religion behind her arguments, as well as a strong, unshaken belief in them *per se*, while Philip's were merely the dictates of his reason in the analysis

of a social problem. He realized, as he looked at Dorothy, how immeasurably above him she was because of her steadfast allegiance to her principles, in spite of the terrible cost. He watched her with despairing eyes, till every other thought was sunk in the one overwhelming realization that she was lost to him, and a fierce cry broke from him :

"Dorothy! Dorothy! Don't give me up! Don't! If you send me away from you, I shall go mad. I cannot bear to lose you. Waive your judgment for once. Think what it means to us. Come to me and be my wi— "

"Mistress!" Dorothy interrupted with glittering eyes. "Do you love me so little, Philip, that you would let me disgrace myself like that? There could be no marriage between us. You are bound to her until one or the other of you dies. If I allowed you to get a divorce, and marry me, I should be as bad as the worst outcast among women, for I should be doing voluntarily what I feel to be a sin. No, Philip," she went on sadly, her anger dying as suddenly as it came, "we can never marry. We should never be happy. Life would grow unbearable, when I lost my self-respect, and my love for you would change to hatred, for I should feel that you had fallen irrevocably in permitting

me to do this thing. I can live, if I can still love you, Philip, even if it must be silently; but I should die, if you killed my faith."

Philip stood apart, his bowed head buried in his hands, and for the first time since the night when they came from the Pyramids, Dorothy noticed that one of them was bandaged. She went to him silently, and took the wounded hand in both of hers ;

"What have you done to yourself, Philip?" she asked fearfully, for a moment all other feeling dissolving into a tremulous anxiety.

Philip explained to her what had happened at Gizeh, making little of a pain which would have been insufferable, had his mental anguish been less intense, and she, with perceptions dulled from the strain of the hour with him, accepted quiescently what ordinarily she would have moaned over with questions and fears.

She turned from him dumbly, her mind reverting to the change in their positions, and the inevitableness of their parting, and a sudden weakness came over her, while her whole personality rose protesting against their separation. She swayed toward Philip, every fibre of her body yielding to the longings of her heart, and then, with a mighty effort, she gathered herself together:

"You had better leave me, Philip," she said mournfully, with a world of misery in her voice.

"Where shall I go?" Philip asked impetuously, turning toward her. "Where shall I go? It is easy to tell me to leave you, but do you realize that I have no place in the world where I can go — no person in the world who cares what becomes of me? What is there left for me to do?"

Dorothy laid her hand on his arm, and spoke softly and earnestly to him:

"You are talking wildly, Philip. You do not know what you say —" Dorothy's voice broke. "You must go back to her, if it is possible," she said between her sobs. "If you can't — why — oh! I can't tell you what to do! Don't you see I have borne all I can? I can't put you out of my life, though I send you away. I love you — oh, Philip! — more than you can ever know. Now go, dear, go, for I can't bear this any longer," and Dorothy shuddered, covering her face with her hands.

Philip turned at once and staggered out of the Mosque.

CHAPTER XVIII

NEVER any more
While I live
Need I hope to see his face
As before.

R. BROWNING.

"SHE has sent me back to you, Renée," Philip said wearily, dropping into the large lounging-chair in the Baroness's morning-room late that night. His face was flushed and his clothes were disordered, and he seemed agitated and unnatural, while the eyes that met hers were red and inflamed.

The Baroness, dressed in a soft violet gown, was standing before him, toying with a gold miniature case which hung from a jewelled chain about her neck. When Philip spoke, the locket dropped from her hands.

"Do you mean that you have seen Dorothy, and she has given you up, Philip?" she asked.

"I mean just that, Renée. She says it is utterly useless to talk to her; she can never marry me while my wife lives."

"She is adamant in regard to a divorce?"

"She will not hear of it. She says our marriage would never be lawful, that she would hate me if I forced her into it and there is no doubt but she would," Philip's mood was wearily indifferent. The reaction from the tense mental strain of his parting with Dorothy, added to his physical weakness and weariness, made him stupid and numb.

"What are you going to do?" the Baroness asked quietly.

"I asked Dorothy that question, and she sent me back to you," Philip replied. "We are both shipwrecked, Renée, and perhaps it is just as well for us to try to pull to shore together."

The Baroness leaned forward and looked into his bloodshot eyes. Her own were luminous and tender, and the color crept over her face.

"You are asking me to share your life again, Philip, to try to atone for the past?"

Philip rose and stood before her:

"That 's about it, Renée," he said recklessly. "We have made a bungle of our lives, and we can't better them by keeping apart; perhaps, if we go on together, we can find a little happiness somewhere."

The Baroness laid her forehead upon her hand, which rested on the high mantel, and for

a moment neither spoke. Then she asked quietly:

"What do you offer me, Philip? No love, no respect, not even pity. On what ground do you come to me?"

"Because we are bound to each other—Dorothy says so; until one or the other of us dies, we are irrevocably tied together. Funny, is n't it? One might almost laugh at such a suggestion." Philip laughed a little, and then his shifting eyes met hers. "Well, what do you say to my proposition, Renée?" he asked.

The Baroness crossed to him, and laid her hands on his shoulders.

"Do you still love Dorothy?" she asked earnestly.

Philip moved uneasily under her steady gaze.

"How do I know?" he said waveringly. "What is love, any way? 'A false creation proceeding from a heat-oppressed brain.' I did love her; but she has given me up, so I have come back to you, Renée. Don't you want me?" he asked. "You won't send me away too, Renée?"

The Baroness put her hand over his, which rested on her shoulder. It scorched her fingers, and she looked up suddenly into his face,

her own stamping a great fear. His brows were contracted, so that they met over his eyes, and he put up his hand to shield them from the light.

"No, Philip, I won't send you away," she said with boundless tenderness, leading him to a chair as if he had been a child. He dropped limply into it, and lay restlessly moving his head from side to side, as it rested on the cushion. The Baroness's face was grave and anxious, and she laid her hand on his forehead, hoping to quiet him. Philip did not appear to notice her; but gradually, under the charm of her fingers, he became more quiet, the violent throbbing in his temples ceased, the weary eyelids dropped over the stinging eyes, and Philip slept.

When Renée was sure that he was asleep, she took her hands gently from his head, and, after turning down the light and throwing a thin wrap over him, she summoned Najib and sent him at once for Dr. Eisenbach.

The doctor stood watching Philip silently, his jovial face drooping into unaccustomed solemnity, and after taking his temperature, he drew the Baroness into the hall.

"He is in a bad way," he said, scanning the beautiful, anxious eyes with tender sympathy.

"He was hurt at the Pyramids yesterday, and did not send for me till this morning, twelve hours too late. I found it was an infected wound, but I dressed it, and left directions for him to follow, going back this afternoon, as I agreed to; but he was nowhere to be seen, and I have been very anxious. Now his temperature is 104 and I must look at his hand. He is in a very critical condition, Baroness," and then he asked her to get him the various necessary things he had not brought with him. She stood, calm and ready, beside him, while he re-dressed the disfigured hand, helping him as she could in her composed, practical way, and together they succeeded in dressing it without thoroughly rousing Philip. The hand was doing better than the doctor had feared at first, and he left some more medicine, which Renée was to give him at intervals through the night.

"Don't wake him," the doctor said softly. "He needs sleep as much as anything, and, since his hand is less painful, he may get it. It is my opinion that there is some mental worry which is partly responsible for the fever and exhaustion." He stopped abruptly and faced her: "What has he got on his mind, Baroness?"

Renée slipped her hand in his arm, and walked with him toward the door. "I can't tell you, doctor dear; don't ask me. We can't help him any now, you or I, can we? But you say Nature can — he may sleep off this extreme nervousness. Then this shall be my portion — to keep him asleep. Now good-night. What a good doctor you are!" she added tenderly, as she watched him vanish into the night.

The Baroness went back to the room noiselessly, and after assuring herself that everything possible had been done for Philip's comfort, she drew up a chair opposite him and in the dim light watched him silently. Her mind was busy, and the varying thoughts, as they crowded thick and fast through her brain, left their impress upon her expressive face and in her beautiful eyes. The wounded hand resting upon the arm of the chair caught her sedulous gaze, and she leaned forward and pressed the edge of his sleeve with her lips, while the tears ran unchecked down her face.

The hours went by, and neither moved. The gray dawn crept in through the chinks in the curtains and touched with chill fingers the desolate woman keeping her solitary vigil beside the death-like figure. The violet evening-dress

she wore intensified the dark shadows under her eyes and the extreme whiteness of her face. The great, dark, hungry eyes, full of unconstrained yearning, rested upon the sleeping figure, burning through the barriers of the present, freeing, one by one, the memories which the passing years had failed to kill. She opened the miniature case and compared the face upon the ivory with the one before her, bending forward in her eagerness to trace the changes the years had wrought upon the man she knew so well. Under her intense scrutiny, Philip shivered and lifted his eyelids. The locket shut with a little click, and the woman's face changed instantly, breaking into a tender smile in answer to his look.

For a space he groped blindly in the dulness of the first moments of wakefulness; then he woke to full understanding, and took in everything about him, — the daylight, her unchanged dress, the haggard look on her face, and his own disorder.

"I have kept you up all night," he said reproachfully. "You should have gone to bed. Why did you not send me away?"

The Baroness smiled. "It does n't matter," she said lightly. "I sat thinking, and the hours flew by. I am not tired." But the

white face gave the lie to her words. She looked exhausted and ill, as if she had been spending the hours while he slept in physical labor, instead of mental anxiety and reflection. In a moment she blundered to her feet, overcoming with difficulty a growing faintness, and took from a curious Egyptian cabinet which was in the room, a little silver chafing-dish. The chills were running up and down her spine, and her teeth were chattering; but she ground them together, and battled as against a visible enemy, until she had conquered her physical ills. Then she prepared two cups of hot bouillon, while Philip lay listlessly back in his chair watching her abstractedly. They sat sipping the refreshing drink in utter silence, until the last drop was drunk, then Philip placed his cup upon the table, and, turning to Renée, spoke with decision and calmness.

"I am going back to Italy, Renée. Egypt has become unbearable. Perhaps I shall go back to New York again, I can't tell — any way I must get away from here."

"You will see Dorothy again, Philip?"

"No, I shall go at once," he said almost sharply. "We have said our good-bye, and the sooner I go, the better for us both."

Renée's eyes gleamed upon him; for a moment she lost control of herself.

"And me?" she said under her breath.

All the years of misery which he had borne because of her dashed through Philip's consciousness and cast their shadow down the dreary vista of years which he must live if life were spared him, and her untiring vigil of the night faded from him. To his eternal regret, he spoke brutally to her:

"I suppose you will do what I shall have to do — exist," he said.

The Baroness's eyes were upon Philip, and he never forgot their expression. Once in the early years of his life the hotel in which he was staying had caught fire, and the inmates were hastily turned from their rooms, meeting in the corridors in all stages of disorder and frenzy; one woman had dashed past him and for an instant flashed her eyes upon him. "My baby!" she wailed, running toward the flames. The look in her eyes had haunted him all these years, and to-day he met it again in those before him. The Baroness sank into a chair. The thumping in her temples confused her, and she leaned forward, pushing her hands hard against her head.

"Philip!" she said presently, all her agony

breaking into a last despairing prayer, "Philip, you are going away, and I shall never see you again. Will you not part in kindness? Let me feel your forgiveness. Have pity!"

For the first time since Philip had seen the Baroness in Cairo, he was struck with her sincerity. He had felt before that there was an element of acting in her attitude, and had been repelled by it; but to-day he was powerless to withstand the pleading in her voice. Her honesty swayed him. Perhaps he stumbled upon some dim idea of what those years had been to her, for something like pity rose in his heart. He took a step toward her, but the vision of Dorothy as he had last seen her dimmed his eyes, and the moment of relenting passed. He turned toward the window, and stood looking out on the cold, cheerless landscape. The silence settled around them. The Baroness's voice dropped to a whisper:

"Can you never forgive me, Philip?" she breathed brokenly. "Is there no expiation for my sin? Is there no sacrifice great enough to blot this bitterness out of your heart?" She threw her hands out toward him in mute distress; but the man did not turn, and her hands dropped back upon the arm of the chair. For an instant she sat thus, her beautiful head

crushed in her hands, and then she rose and stood before him, transformed. The tenderness had left her face, and the woman that the world knew stood before him. The Baroness von Hausheim held out her hand:

"At least you will shake hands," she said lightly, "and allow me to wish you 'bon voyage'?"

Philip touched the cold fingers for a moment with his own.

"You have been very kind, Baroness, and I thank you."

CHAPTER XIX

I SHUT my eyes and turned them on my heart;
As a man calls for wine before he fights,
I asked one draught of earlier, happier sights
Ere fitly I could hope to play my part.

BROWNING.

PHILIP had been gone from Cairo for a week when the Baroness met Dorothy one morning on the street. Both women were pale, and Dorothy would have passed by with slight recognition, but the Baroness stepped in front of her and held out her hand:

"Don't I deserve a fair trial, Dorothy?" she asked earnestly, her open palm outstretched. "Are you going to condemn me unheard?"

Dorothy's heart was sore with the mystery of the Baroness's friendship with Philip, and she was bruised and bleeding from the parting with him, but she raised two sad, reproachful eyes to Renée's face and a mist gathered in them, for she saw new lines traced upon it, — the indelible marks of suffering left by the strain of the last weeks. There are moments under high

stress of emotion when the power is given us to look beneath the surface, — never-to-be-forgotten moments when the bandages of reserve and pride are torn aside, and the stricken heart is naked to our comprehending eyes. This is the great recompense which comes to one who has passed over the border of suffering, for only through the travail of the soul are the eyes of the spirit born. Such a moment came to Dorothy. The fact that the Baroness had suffered too, was enough for her, and with a little sob, she put her hand into the one held out to her.

The Baroness's fingers closed tightly upon Dorothy's, and she turned and walked beside her.

"I want to talk with you, dear," she said. "Can you come to me now? We will send word to your father and you can spend the day with me."

They had been seated some time in the morning-room, which was so full of memories to them both, before the Baroness spoke on the subject which filled both their hearts. She leaned forward in her chair and looked at Dorothy.

"You have been feeling very bitter toward me, dear, and had quite made up your mind

to give me up altogether, had n't you? Confess!"

Her hand dropped for a moment upon Dorothy's and her eyes rested tenderly upon her. In many ways Dorothy had been as undiscriminating as a child. She had accepted the Baroness's love unquestioningly, and returned it twofold; she had grown to defer to her judgment, and had taken with childish trust what she could not comprehend; but in the clear eyes to-day the Baroness saw something she had never expected to see, — disapprobation and mistrust, and directed toward her.

Dorothy felt as if she had waked to consciousness after having wandered through the long night in a beautiful dream, waked to find the idol of it gone, and the woman who was her best friend mysteriously connected with his departure. There was some awful mystery. It was her right to be told and she demanded that right. The Baroness read this in her face and rose uneasily. Dorothy had seemed so tractable in her hands that she had never discovered the latent force in her character, and the decision and firmness she met disturbed her. She had waited the week before seeking Dorothy out, in order to get her

physical strength to the point where it would not fail her when she put upon it the severe strain incidental to the meeting. She did not fear Dorothy's judgment upon her intimacy with Philip, for she felt it would be easy to blind Dorothy's eyes to the truth with a few words of explanation; but she did fear her own strength to play the rôle she had determined upon. Now, under the honest, self-contained eyes, the explanation she meant to offer seemed inadequate and transparent. It was necessary for her to have time to rearrange her plans for vindication, and meanwhile the silence must be broken, so she said lightly:

"Aren't we playing a little bit at melodrama, Dorothy?"

The jesting struck a false note in Dorothy's ear. She stirred impatiently, and the ready tears rose to her eyes.

"Now I will put my case, and you shall judge." The Baroness moved her chair with an affectation of indifference, and settled herself comfortably in it. She had a strange, uneasy feeling that she must remove herself from the vision of Dorothy's eyes, or the latter would see beneath the surface and discover the thing the Baroness was perjuring her soul to conceal. Something seemed to have given way in her

head since she had seen Dorothy, and her mind almost refused to do her bidding.

The sight of her was like a two-edged knife cutting into the lacerated, quivering flesh of an old wound. All her sensibilities were alive to the hurt of it, yet it was her hand that must grasp the blade and force it in deep, deep in her heart, while her lips spoke and smiled. Oh, the agonizing torture of it!

She began speaking calmly. In the effort to make her voice natural, it sounded dull and depressed:

"In the first place, Dorothy, Philip and I knew each other years ago in New York. I knew his wife — knew her well, and you can imagine how painful it must have been to him after all these years to meet some one who knew of his past and was closely associated with it. I brought it all back to him with intensity, — an intensity all pain, Dorothy, for the old life was dead to him, as dead as if it had never been." In spite of herself a sad note crept through the dulness of her voice. "He knew that I was a friend of hers — his wife's — and he came because I sent for him. I sent for him because I wanted a little pity for her. I know what her life has been —" she was losing control of herself, unmindful of

the eager eyes which were on her face, and her voice sank drearily, — "how wretched all these years have been to her, for I have kept in touch with her, and I know how she has suffered, how her one desire has been to have his forgiveness, how that one thought has kept her living all these wretched, wretched years — the thought that some time she would hear him say, 'I forgive you.'" The Baroness seemed to have forgotten Dorothy, and her voice sank to a murmur.

She lifted two bright, dry eyes to Dorothy, and saw the tears on the other's cheeks, — Dorothy was crying for the other woman, the Baroness, — and Renée's arms stretched out and gathered her to her breast, while she kissed the blessed tears from her face. For an instant they both sobbed; then the Baroness recovered herself and smiled through her tears:

"But, my dear, my dear! Why are you crying? You should not cry! You have all his love, — all the glory of his entire love, Dorothy, and that was what he was telling me when you surprised us that day, dear, — that he had" — the Baroness's clenched hand bore hard into her forehead — "not one particle of pity for her. No pity! No pity!"

For a moment Dorothy forgot her misery in the anguish of this other woman's story. She grasped the Baroness's hands as she knelt at her feet, and looked into the older woman's face with a world of pity in her eyes.

"Cruel! cruel!" she cried.

The Baroness's face hardened:

"No, Dorothy, it was not cruel. You do not know what he had borne through her, dear; she had ruined his life. That she had suffered too, was no excuse for her. She should have known there was no forgiveness possible."

"But she was his wife," Dorothy said.

"She was his wife no longer," the Baroness answered, and then a wave of light broke upon her, and with feverish eagerness she hurried on, as if fearing the might of her resolve. "Don't you see, dear, she was not his wife. When she ran away and left him, she severed all bonds. She could no longer be anything to him. He was released from all loyalty to her. She had desecrated all the ties of wifehood and died to him. He is free, Dorothy, as free as if he had never married her. Don't you see this?"

"She is his wife," Dorothy said persistently. She had come back upon firm ground once

more and got her bearings. She rose and went back to her chair.

"Dorothy dear, don't let this false position ruin your life and take from him all the happiness he has ever known." The Baroness looked into Dorothy's face for a sign of relenting; but her lips were tightly set, and her brows were drawn together over her heavy eyes. She must convince her. Philip's happiness was at stake, and Dorothy must be made to yield.

Renée went on hastily, while her face grew gray and old. "She was not worthy of him, Dorothy," she said with repressed excitement. "There never was a time when she was worthy of him. She was a cruel woman" — Dorothy's face did not relax, and the Baroness dropped on her knees before her, and took hold of both of her hands; in desperation she pleaded his cause, utterly oblivious of the fact that with every word she uttered she was condemning herself— "Dorothy, a wicked woman, for after she left him she got a divorce and married another man."

The Baroness had played her last card, and fearfully watched the results. Dorothy stared at the woman in front of her as she slowly withdrew her fingers:

"She got a divorce and married another man," she repeated uncertainly, lifting her hands to her temples. The words set her mind working again, and her life-long beliefs came back to her.

"Her divorce would not hold," she said slowly; "our church would not grant it. By the laws of God, she is his wife."

Renée rose painfully and went back to her chair; Dorothy had removed herself an immeasurable distance by her last words and the Baroness felt a hopelessness in the effort to reach her. While she was collecting her random arguments, Dorothy watched her measuredly and finally spoke:

"A moment ago," she said deliberately, "you were pleading *her* cause; you begged for pity from him. What does it mean, Renée?"

The Baroness raised her head and looked at Dorothy with apprehensive eyes. Her face went from white to red, and back to white again. A false move, and Dorothy would know all; her identity must be kept from her at any cost. In her despair, the Baroness realized this:

"She was my friend, Dorothy, and I loved her. Though I know she deserves all the

wretchedness she has borne, I would give her the peace of his forgiveness. She has suffered enough." A wave of self-pity came over her. "O God! She has suffered enough!" She recovered herself almost instantly. "But, Dorothy, Philip should suffer no more. He should see some of the beauty of life, for he has dwelt in the sorrow of it. He loves you; you can make him forget the past. Dorothy, his heart will break if you give him up. Give him what he asks, dear; that would give the woman who wrecked his life the only happiness she will ever know. Promise me, dear."

For an instant Dorothy wavered. To be with Philip, to feel his arms about her and rest in the haven of his love! Was anything worth such a sacrifice? Then she steadied herself, and a flush of shame spread over her face. She could never be his wife; their very love was an unholy thing. She turned angrily upon the Baroness:

"You call yourself my friend, Renée, and you ask me to do this. You use all your power to make me false to myself and to him. You think only of what he has suffered, not of the misery it would cause if I should do this. There could be no love without respect—"

The Baroness turned upon her in fury:

"Respect! respect!" she shrieked. "What is your love worth that you can give it up so lightly? You don't know what love is! Dorothy, if I loved a man, I would give myself body and soul, and glory in the giving. There would be nothing but love, love, love! You drive me mad with your ceaseless prating of respect! What are you that you should put yourself upon a pinnacle? Are you so much better than the rest of mankind? Drop this false position and be human, Dorothy. Let yourself feel — feel something of the glory of the love which is yours for the taking."

Dorothy had stared at the Baroness with frightened, horror-struck eyes as the vehement words rolled from her lips; but when she finished, Dorothy gathered her scattered senses enough to make a weak protest:

"You have lived so long abroad, Renée, that you have forgotten how an American looks at these things. If I should follow my desires, it would be a sin, for I know that they are wrong. It is n't because I love him too little," she went on earnestly; "but because I love him too much. I should only bring suffering on us both, if I closed my eyes to the fact that his wife still lives. I can't go against

all my principles, Renée, not even to have his love." She looked at the Baroness, in despair of making herself clear, "Oh, you don't understand," she said hopelessly; "you don't understand!"

"No," the Baroness answered, "I don't understand; I can only feel."

There was a slight pause and then Dorothy started for the door. She had not reached it, when she was caught in a pair of strong arms and turned about. The Baroness held her thus a moment, every nerve quivering as she struggled for control:

"Dorothy, you shall not go like this," she sobbed hysterically. "Come back and talk it out. Don't leave me in anger! It is because I long to have you both happy that I have been so presuming. Dorothy, you don't know what it means to me."

A little wave of the old, unreasoning jealousy rushed over Dorothy, rousing into vigilance the old suspicions that Renée was keeping something back; but she shook it off, and suffered herself to be led to the couch, where the Baroness sat by her side.

She turned and scrutinized Dorothy's face with hungry, beseeching eyes:

"You love him, Dorothy," she said ear-

nestly. "Are you sure that you love him — as — as he loves you?"

The soft tears came into Dorothy's eyes, and rolled unheeded down her cheeks.

"I never cared for any one before, Renée," she said softly. "I gave him everything; he is more than all the world to me."

A thought flashed through the Baroness's mind, vague, intangible, incomplete, but so full of authority that it forced a question to her lips. Her arm tightened about Dorothy, and her voice sank to an awe-struck whisper:

"Dorothy — " the words were almost inaudible — "Dorothy, — if she should die — die — you would marry Philip?"

Dorothy heard the words, but the strangeness of the voice was lost to her, so absorbing was her own suffering, and she answered as if in a dream:

"While she lives, there can never be anything between us," she began sadly. "If she should die — " she seemed to grasp suddenly what she had said, and what it meant to her, and she covered her face with her hands — "O God! Keep me from wishing her dead!"

The silence in the room was only broken by her violent sobbing. The Baroness watched her with wide-open, unnatural eyes. The

thought which had thrust itself upon her a moment earlier was forcing its way into her excited brain, and clamoring for recognition. Her face grew ashen and awe-struck. She pressed her hand hard upon her heart, a crushing weight lay there, and for a moment deadened her intelligence; but gradually the whole horrible situation cleared itself in her mind. Her hands rose and fell heavily under the pressure of her heaving breast. Her eyes fastened upon the floor where the sun shot across the polished surface, making a white streak upon it. She bent forward and stared fascinated, gradually the spot began to settle and, to her over-strung nerves, a yawning gulf appeared widening ever toward her, till she stood tottering upon the verge of an immense abyss. She threw back her hands in terror, and struck the hard wood of the high-backed sofa upon which she sat. Her hands clutched upon it, and her haunted eyes stole to Dorothy's bent figure. With supernatural strength, she forced herself to watch her, — Dorothy, fighting her first great conflict with misery, — and something woke dimly in her memory, "If I could be sure you would be happy all your life, I should consider it compensation for all I have suffered."

Her own words, demanding to be proven, had risen to guide her, and the irrevocableness of their message brought with it a sense of peace. The tension of her nerves relaxed, and she settled back among the pillows with a sigh of relief.

CHAPTER XX

Now is a time to storm; why art thou still?

SHAKESPEARE.

DOROTHY lifted her head without looking at the woman beside her. It was as if a storm had passed over her face, tearing from it all the look of youth and happiness, leaving in its stead a barren waste of pain. She reached over and took the Baroness's hand, dropping her eyes upon the polished nails as the fingers rested on her palm. The silence was momentous, and the Baroness's heart stopped beating. To save her life, she could not make a sound. A curious trick of memory brought to her brain an incident, long forgotten, of a little butterfly moth she had pinned to a board to preserve. She saw again its pitiful effort to escape, heard the beating of its ineffectual wings against its prison; saw — nay, felt the torture of the cruel pin thrust through the quivering body; and she had watched the helpless moth, watched as Dorothy was watching her — pitilessly, patiently, silently, for the struggles to cease. Finally she was conscious

of Dorothy's voice, and the words she was speaking penetrated her numbed brain:

"While I was crying there," Dorothy said simply, "I had a strange experience, and I began to realize that I had been blind all these weeks. I understand it all now, Renée, the story of the little convent-bred girl, and the misery of the grown woman. You need not play a part any longer, dear, it is not necessary." How the poor little scintillating wings were throbbing and thumping against the board, beating out the pulse of life!

The Baroness made one desperate effort to replace the bandage over Dorothy's eyes, and a mirthless laugh broke from her lips:

"You were dreaming, Dorothy. You went back to the foolish story, and imagined an analogy which only exists —"

Dorothy had turned and faced her, and the words refused to cross her lips, her mouth opened and shut helplessly.

"Why did you deceive me, Renée, all this time? Don't you see how much misery you would have saved, if you had been honest with me?"

Renée dropped back among the pillows, inert and lifeless. The little butterfly was weakly fluttering as with a panting breath, the quiver-

ing wings were growing quieter — the great silence was falling. Dorothy continued speaking in an emotionless voice:

"We are in a queer position, Renée. We both love the same man, and you alone have any claim upon him."

"What claim can I have?" the Baroness asked from the depth of the pillows, shaking off the heavy inertia. She was conscious of a grievance against Dorothy. She had been kinder to the butterfly. Dorothy had pulled out the pin and so kept her a long time dying — only the butterfly was still; her struggles were endless. "He loves you, Dorothy. I have passed out of his life altogether. He is yours by the bonds of his love. The tie which held us is broken as certainly as if I had died. I am no longer his wife, for I am the widow of another man." The Baroness had begun to retrace her steps to the arguments of the early afternoon.

Dorothy waived the subject, and, prompted by the wonder in her heart, asked a question: "How could you ever have married the Baron, Renée?"

The Baroness looked intently at Dorothy before she answered, then she drew her down upon the sofa beside her:

"Tell me first, Dorothy, if you can feel any sympathy for the reasons which prompted me to leave Philip at first. Unless you can understand me there, it is useless to try to explain how I went still further, and married again."

Dorothy sat thinking. Both women were calm. It was as if in the hours just passed all the emotions of their hearts had been wrung from them, leaving them both limp and unfeeling.

"Yes, I can understand that, Renée," she said finally. "A girl brought up differently would have been less hasty and sweeping in her judgments probably; but it is perfectly comprehensible to me that you could have left him."

"I had not the patience to learn to be Philip's friend, Dorothy," the Baroness said meditatively. "The road to love is very short and precipitous sometimes, — to friendship, long and up hill all the way, and to insure a happy marriage love must come at the end of friendship's journey, or the lovers must be brave enough to climb the hills together."

The Baroness took a low lounging-chair, and drew up beside the sofa on which Dorothy sat. To Dorothy she seemed less moved than

she had often been when she had generalized with her in the days gone by, and yet she was laying bare the secrets of her inmost soul.

"I never was like other girls," she began reflectively, "and even if I had been brought up differently, I probably should have been queer. The traits of my American father, blended with those of my French mother, made my character a contradiction throughout. Then her despair and wretchedness before my birth probably gave me the morbid tendencies I have always had. These things I have thought upon a great deal, sometimes to justify my conduct to myself in certain instances, but I have always come up against a high wall. The only thing I know is that they are there. Sometimes I am like two people: one ruled by instinct, the other by mind; but in the end it is the heart that always wins. This much I owe to the mother I never saw." Her lips shut, and her eyes grew dreamy and sad.

"When I reached Germany," she said in a moment, "I only had a few pounds that remained of my ready money, and for the first time in my life I had to think of material things. I went to a little pension where I had stayed once before, thinking I could get something to

do to keep me from starving; but the days went by, so drearily, Dorothy, for I knew no one in that vast city, and my money got lower and lower until I was almost at the end of it; then I went to the American consul, and asked him to help me. He and his wife were so good to me, Dorothy, I shall never forget it, and he got me a position as governess in the house of the Baron von Hausheim. He was a widower with only one child, a girl, and being an officer was away much of the time, so it seemed a godsend to me. Gretchen, the little girl, saved my reason, I think; for she was such a darling child, and loved me from the first — was never willing that I should be away from her at all.

"The first few months I rarely saw the Baron. He only came home for brief visits, and then he and Gretchen were inseparable, so I was completely taken by surprise when, on one of these visits, he asked me to marry him. I think he loved me even then; but it seemed incomprehensible to me, for my heart was so full of Philip that the idea had never occurred to me. I told him that I did not love him, and never could, that what he asked was impossible; I would go away, and he would soon forget. He was very kind; he was always

kind, Dorothy, and begged me to stay for Gretchen's sake. He would still be away a great deal, and he would never speak of this again.

"So the months went by, and then came the crisis. Gretchen was always a delicate child, and while her father was away in Egypt, his first winter, she was taken suddenly ill, and died. I was beside myself, not only because of my own grief, but for his, for he idolized the child. It seemed years before he reached Berlin, and when he came at last, he looked so broken and ill, my heart went out to him. He only stayed at home a short time, and the day before he left, he came to me, and begged me to live on there with the same salary. Of course I told him, as nicely as I could, that what he asked was impossible, and then, for the first time since he gave me his word, he broke it. 'I have lost all,' he said so sadly, —'Gretchen, you —' and then came one of my unexplainable impulses, when I told him the story of my life, of my heart's love for another man, and yet, that if I were not married, and he still wished it, I would be his wife.

"At first he tried to devise ways and means by which Philip and I might be brought together again; but when he found I had left

him for good, — would never go back to him under any circumstances, he told me how I could go to America, and get a divorce without seeing Philip again, and then I would be free to marry him. He put it so delicately, Dorothy; I was necessary to him. He had had his romance, and I mine. I was not robbing him of anything by being unable to give him my love. Our lives had met, and there was no reason why they should not go on together. He loved me. I would have his entire devotion and faith; I could make him happy. It seemed so clear to me then, Dorothy; but, as I tell it, it seems beyond belief to you, I can see by your eyes. You won't understand, but I was so hungry for love, my little Gretchen had taken so much affection and care, and my hands were empty again. It is one of life's curious paradoxes, that it was easier to live with a man I did not love, than with one I did, and I had so much respect for him, so much gratitude, I felt I ought to do it if I could lawfully.

"Well, some time perhaps you will comprehend better how I could do this. I took passage on the 'Elbe,' and by a queer circumstance missed the steamer, so was saved from ending my life at that time; but I took the next boat, and went at once to Dakota. There I got my

divorce, after staying three months, and came back to the Baron."

Renée's face shone white and still against the dark cushions. Her eyes gazed at Dorothy from dark circles, and her lips were colorless. Dorothy had scarcely moved from the time the Baroness began her story.

"That is all there is to tell, Dorothy," she said presently. "The Baron was always good to me, and I spent my entire time trying to make him happy. And I did it; that is almost the only thing in my life I can look back upon without regret. Life would have been unbearable if he had not known my story, but as it was, he was always patient and sympathetic with my moods, and the years passed.

"We never outlive our first love, Dorothy," the Baroness was speaking her thoughts and Dorothy was the sympathetic listener again as she had been so many times. "We come back to it over and over, throughout our entire lives. Now the six years I lived in the Baron's house are as a dream to me, and the years before are the ones which stand clear in my memory, the early part of my two years with Philip — oh, Dorothy!" For the first time the Baroness lost control of herself, and for a moment her misery swayed her.

Then she rose and walked slowly down the large room.

Dorothy put her hand through the Baroness's arm, and together they paced the floor in silence.

"You and Philip should come together again, Renée," Dorothy said at last. "That would be the best thing which could happen."

"You must learn to hold the idea that the Philip I loved was another man, Dorothy. We are separated by many things,—law, right, and our own wills; there could never be any possibility of our meeting again. Dispel from your thoughts any such idea." In spite of her words, the thought lodged for a moment in her heart, with all its attendant allurements and cravings, and then she thrust it from her, forcing herself to realize the hopelessness of it. She was dead to Philip, without his being free from her. She had become only a barrier to keep him from perhaps greater happiness than he had ever known with her. She stood helplessly between them, and no desire of hers could further their happiness. As long as she lived they must be apart.

"It seems hard that we are all bound to be miserable, Renée. I could bear it, if I thought you and he were happy."

"And I, if you and he were," Renée interrupted; "Dorothy, we are playing at melodrama again," she went on lightly. "You are putting a barrier of straw between yourself and Philip, —a barrier which any good, wholesome breeze would scatter broadcast. The thing which separates you is forced enough to be absurd. There is no reason in the world why you should not marry him."

"Let 's not go back to that topic, Renée," Dorothy said hastily, while the tears started to her eyes; "it is so useless to argue, so worse than useless."

"Then you won't be convinced," Renée said smilingly.

Dorothy bit her lips, and, turning, picked up her hat from the table and put it on. Her back was toward the Baroness, and Renée's eyes dwelt lovingly upon her figure. Her face was almost stolid, but her brain was travelling at a breakneck speed. There were conclusions to be reached before Dorothy turned:

"The great ball comes to-night, Renée," Dorothy said, as she buttoned her short coat.

Renée came softly up to her, and put her hands upon her shoulders, looking her straight in the eyes, "And you will go," she said, authoritatively; "you will wear your prettiest

dress, and dance with light feet; we women often have to do these things."

"And you?" Dorothy asked.

"I, oh, it does not matter about me, I sha'n't be missed," she answered, and then she roused herself. "Of course I shall go," she said hastily, "if I can manage to deaden this headache, which is getting pretty bad."

Dorothy turned at the door and came back to kiss the Baroness.

"I think I could give him up to you!" she said earnestly.

The Baroness's eyes filled, and she controlled herself with an effort.

"We will talk it all over some other time, Dorothy. There must be a way out of it." Dorothy was going; she was closing the door, had gone.

The Baroness tried to reach a chair, but the sound of many waters was in her ears, the mighty waves were bearing down upon her, and with a little helpless cry, she fell in a heap upon the floor.

CHAPTER XXI

NEVER morning wore
To evening, but some heart did break.

TENNYSON.

DOROTHY took down her prettiest ball dress, laid the accessories upon the bed by its side, and proceeded to do her hair with unusual care. This was the night of the grand ball at Shepheard's, and she must look her best. The season was almost over, and the morrow would see a general exodus of the guests, and Cairo would begin to settle down to the quiet of the summer months. Dorothy's face had little expectation in it. Instead, the reflection in the mirror before which she stood showed a very wan little woman with dark, sad eyes, and a pitifully drooping mouth; but she would make one last effort to deceive her father and the guests, and play the fifth act of the tragedy with dissembling cheerfulness, though her heart was breaking underneath.

About the room were flowers of every kind in careless profusion, some in the boxes as they had come from the florist's, some in piles as

they had been dropped from the baskets the Arabs had brought. All but one group bore a card; that one, — masses of orange blossoms, drowning the odor of the others in its own overwhelming perfume, — came without a name, but Dorothy needed no card to tell her who was the sender. Each day since the drive to Heliopolis, Philip had sent orange blossoms to her room, and usually Dorothy had worn some in her dress, — for in Egypt the orange blossom is without significance as a bridal flower — but since he had left, they had not come at all until to-night, and now their fragrance stifled Dorothy, steeped as it was in memories of him. She had avoided the places which were fragrant with them since her parting with Philip, because she could not bear the thoughts they awoke, but to-night she picked up a mass of the redolent blossoms and pinned them in the front of her dress and in her shining hair. The night was so full of misery any way that one added woe could make no difference, and she would wear them in loyalty to Philip. She surveyed the reflected figure listlessly when she was wholly dressed. She was very beautiful in her shimmering satin, with her perfect neck and shoulders rising, flower-like, above the snowy whiteness of her gown, and yet the

knowledge awoke no enthusiasm within her, for the light had gone out of her life, and even her beauty counted for little when it did not shine for Philip.

Her father came for her when she was fully dressed, and kissed her tenderly:

"You are very like your mother to-night, Dorothy," he said reflectively, gazing at her with dreamy eyes. "You look as she did the night we were married. She wore orange blossoms in her hair, as you do now, and — I could almost believe the years had flown backward as you stand here to-night."

The tears rose to Dorothy's eyes. "Shall I take off the flowers, papa dear?" she said, raising her hand to her head, but Mr. Dike restrained her with a gesture:

"Not for the world, Dorothy. Do you think I would so willingly give up a vision of the past?" Then he shook off his melancholy and said, "Now I have made you sad, daughter. You must not let my reminiscences mar your pleasure to-night. If only Philip were here!"

Dorothy turned her back, suddenly bursting into a mirthless laugh, and speaking with suspicious vivacity:

"I shall be gay enough, papa; just think, I

am already engaged for half the dances, and look at my lovely flowers!" She flung open the bedroom-door, "See, such masses of them, I can't even arrange them!"

Mr. Dike looked at them critically, taking up each card significantly.

"You are very popular, Dorothy," and then he looked at her keenly. "Whose flowers will you wear, Dorothy?"

She turned abruptly, and took him by the shoulders, giving him a little shake, "Now, papa, you must not be too curious. I sha'n't wear any others than these I have on, and you see these are safe, as no card came with them."

Mr. Dike looked at the remainder of the orange blossoms, and began to make an attempt to unravel the mystery, but Dorothy interrupted:

"Come, dear, don't try to solve it. It is time to go down," and she slipped her hand into his arm affectionately, and went with him downstairs.

In the hall he left her with Dr. Eisenbach, and in the moment of quiet before her friends came to claim her, the doctor had time to say:

"The Baroness will not come to-night, Miss Dorothy; I have just sent her some morphine by her maid, who came to tell me that she is

suffering from one of her heavy headaches. She ought not to take much morphine, for her heart is inclined to be erratic; but she suffers so she must have some relief — she is frail in spite of her activity, and will go out like a candle some time — a shock — a grief and — "

The doctor's words brought up to Dorothy the scene of the afternoon, and for a moment an oppression fell upon her, filling her with a nameless foreboding; but the claimants for her card who crowded about her apparently drove the Baroness, Philip, and everything else quite out of her head, for she tripped into the mazes of the dance with glistening eyes, and merry laughter on her lips.

The evening was nearly over. Dorothy had danced, and danced, and danced. All the lightness in her body must have gone to her feet, for no sign of weariness lay there. It was the last party of the season, and to most of those assembled there it meant the last meeting with the winter's acquaintances and friends; and below the piping of the flutes and the joyous singing of the violins throbbed the sad dirge of inevitable partings.

A waltz Dorothy had just danced with Mr. Keith was ended, and he led her out into the cool half-light of the fairy garden. Into one

of the summer houses they went, and sitting in the fragrant, seductive retreat, enjoyed the silence and beauty of the matchless night. Mr. Keith had selfishly put his name down for two dances together, that he might have her through an entire one in the seclusion of the garden. He had been upon the anxious seat long enough, and to-night he determined to learn his fate. Philip's sudden departure had meant a possible chance for himself; for there could be only one interpretation of his disappearance, — he had proposed and been refused. He had known all along that Philip cared for Dorothy; but he had never proved to his own satisfaction her feeling for Philip, and now hope began to bud again in his heart, for Philip had left, and Dorothy was here.

She leaned back on the seat in sudden weariness, and for the first time that evening allowed her real self to get the upper hand. Mr. Keith noticed it, and bent toward her slightly:

"You are tired out," he said softly, taking up the fan which lay in her lap and fanning her gently. Dorothy smiled brightly toward him but did not lift her head from the back of the chair.

"A little of everything," she said quietly,

"the weariness from the dancing, the parting with friends, and the thought that this is to be the end of Cairo—it all goes to help make me fagged. It has been a beautiful winter," she added dreamily. Her eyes wore the vacant look which comes when the sight is turned inward upon the heart memories. "And to-night ends it — all. Do you go to-morrow?" she asked.

"I am not sure yet," Mr. Keith replied. "There are many things which must be arranged first. What are you going to do?" he asked earnestly.

"We go to Constantinople, and to Paris across the continent," Dorothy replied; "then home, I think; we are not sure. We are wanderers now," she added. "We don't plan much ahead. You see we have stayed here till we are driven out. Don't you hate, hate, hate to go?" she asked with tearful vehemence.

"I can't tell you how much, Dorothy." The fan stopped swaying, and the man's fingers closed around it. His eyes were upon her face, and tears welled up in them. "Have I a ghost of a chance, Dorothy?" he blurted out. He had not meant to speak like this, but his feelings were too much for him; they could be kept hidden no longer. "You know

I love you, Dorothy, of course, you are not blind. I have had eyes for nobody else since I first came to Cairo, but I should never have spoken because I thought you cared for — some one else; but now the — the person who has seemed to stand in my way has gone, and given me a hope that perhaps — some time you might learn to care for me — as I do for you."

His voice shook with the sincerity of his emotion, and Dorothy's eyes reflected the tears she met in his:

"Oh, I am so sorry!" she said woefully. "I have been so selfish! I never dreamed that this would happen." His face grew haggard and drawn beneath her pitying gaze, and she stretched a hand out pleadingly toward him, "Don't, don't look so wretched — it is all a mistake. I could n't give you what you ask, for —" she stopped suddenly, her eyes full of pain and compassion.

Mr. Keith did not move, but the sadness on his face deepened, "Then it is as I feared," he said hopelessly. "You love Philip Morrison; you will marry him."

Dorothy turned toward him sadly, and with mingled emotions shining through her tears. "Yes," she said quietly; "it is only right that you should know it. I do love him, but I

shall never marry him; you are wrong in that. He is gone, and I shall not see him again." Then a sweet pity for his silent distress came over her, and she put her hand upon his which lay upon her chair. "You will forget this and forget me," she said softly; "and it would be one of the saddest of the many sad memories I have of Cairo, if I did not believe this to be true. You have been such a loyal friend to me," she went on, "and I honor you so" — she paused a moment, looking steadily into his yearning eyes — "so much that if I could, in honesty to you, I would be your wife; but my heart is dead, and I could give you nothing — nothing."

Mr. Keith grasped at a straw which floated before his glazing eyes:

"You say you will never marry him; then is there no hope that I might win you some time? Dorothy, my love is so great that it would be bound to make yours grow in time."

"No, no, it is useless — you must forget it," and Dorothy's lips shut in a wan little smile. "I am cut out for a little old maid," she said drearily. "I shall never marry anybody."

She rose wearily and dragged her feet toward the shadowy doorway.

"Come, take me back," she said. "The

dance goes on, and we must join in it, though our hearts break."

Mr. Keith rose to do her bidding, when Captain Saunders appeared, peering into the half-light of the bower.

"I have hunted everywhere for you," he said breathlessly, when he discovered Dorothy. "Our dance is half over. I can't miss it — hurry!" and he drew her off toward the music and the lights.

At the door Mrs. Lee stopped them, and the abject self-forgetfulness of the little woman's attitude sent to Dorothy's soul a sickening sense of calamity and insufferable regret.

"The Baroness!" she whispered huskily, twining her shaking fingers about Dorothy's wrist. "Marie came for the doctor, and he sent me for you."

CHAPTER XXII

OR was it that Fate had snapped the thread
When a tangled skein in life had come.
JAMES KING DUFFY.

"IT is only my head, Marie, don't be nervous — just let me get to bed," the Baroness said when she opened her eyes and saw the terrified face of her maid bending above her.

Marie summoned Najib, and together they half led, half carried her to her room, where she dropped, passive and mute, upon the couch. For a long time the silence was unbroken, save for the moving of a tender hand across a fevered brow, then the Baroness spoke:

"Get me to bed, Marie, and then go to the doctor for some more morphine. All my powders are gone, and I want another prescription. Tell him to give them to me strong — strong," she repeated, "for my head is bursting."

With tender hands Marie helped the Baroness undress, brushing her lovely hair, and braiding it loosely, as she liked to have it done when her head ached; then she tucked her in bed,

and after lighting the night-lamp, turned again to the Baroness.

"There is nothing more, Marie," the Baroness said in answer to the questioning look. "Tell the doctor he need not come. I shall be better in the morning, but I am mad with pain to-night."

Marie went out softly and closed the door. The Baroness sat up and listened to her footsteps; then she crept out of bed and lighted the gas. Slipping on a *peignoir*, she sat down by her desk; a curious, cunning expression distorted her features and made her look almost uncanny.

"The headaches are excuse enough," she said softly. "It is so easy to take too much morphine — when one is in pain."

Then she drew out paper and pen, and commenced to write. Her face grew sad and tender and full of utter hopelessness as her pen sped over the paper. The old German text she had not used in years dropped from her fingers unconsciously, and she wrote page after page.

"DEAR PHILIP, — I asked you once if there was no sacrifice great enough that I could make to blot all bitterness out of your heart. The answer in your face killed all hope that I ever had that you might

forgive — and yet I have determined to make the great sacrifice, Philip, not wholly that you may think more kindly of me, or that Dorothy may be happy, but that I may have the bliss of feeling for one hour that I am giving my all to you. I shall take an overdose of morphine to-night, and close my eyes to the light of this weary world. No one but yourself will know that it is intentional. I have taken morphine of late for severe headaches, and an overdose can be easily accounted for. I shall cover up my intentions so every one will feel it was an accident; but you will know it is my supreme gift to you — to you, Philip. Can one do more than this for a friend — lay down his life? Ah, Philip, let me open my heart to you, my love, only this once, this once, just for the joy of writing. For these few moments you are mine, all mine, and you must hear me. Dear, dear, listen! You thought I did not love you when I left you. I wanted you to think that, because I thought it would make your suffering less; but it was not true, dear, it was not true. I loved you so wholly, so absorbingly, that I was jealous of every outside thing. I made a fetich of my love for you. You were my all — my god — and the growing indifference made me mad. I did not doubt your love — not then — but I felt it was going. The love of the first year had changed — other things came before it, and I felt I could never live to see it grow less and less. Ah, if I had only understood! I have learned that this is the tragedy of a woman's life, — this learning to surrender

— to do without. But, Philip, I was young then, — unsophisticated — a quivering, sensitive girl enveloped in my love for you. Remember I was seeing the world for the first time, and its cruelty killed me. I felt I ought to be as much to you as you were to me — your all; and when gradually the truth was forced upon me that my influence was growing less and less, that our love was only a romantic, youthful dream to be outlived — that the women I met were facsimiles of what I should be a few years hence, — wives only in name, — I knew I could not bear it. Oh, Philip, I was crazed with wretchedness! I knew I should go mad if I stayed."

The Baroness brushed the hair from her forehead, and for a moment closed her eyes. Then she fell on her knees and continued writing, her face perfectly colorless save for the two glittering, wonderful eyes. Her pen stumbled on under her shaking fingers and excited brain, and the moments flew by — the last of her miserable, pitiful life.

"I took passage on the 'Umbria' under an assumed name, and kept in my cabin all the way. The terrible seriousness of my decision did not strike me until I was on the ocean, sailing surely and swiftly away from you. I burned my bridges, dear — I dared not go back — but there has never been a day when I would not have crawled on my hands and knees to

kiss the ground where your feet had trod. One word from you would have brought me from the ends of the world to be your slave. I loved you more than all else, and so I left you. Oh, the agony of those years, Philip! Then I met the Baron and he wanted me to marry him. I told him my story, and learned from him that I could go to America and get a divorce there after a short residence. I went to Dakota and obtained my divorce upon notice by publication, and that is why you never had any actual knowledge of it. When I returned we were married. I crushed out my heart, and killed myself to try to forget. Oh! I have never forgotten! O God, that I could! I am on my knees to-night, Philip dear, writing this to you. It is my atonement. If I could only feel your forgiveness as my last conscious thought, Philip! I am afraid to die — afraid, dear, but I would face it gladly if I could see the old look in your face again. Is n't my atonement complete? Dear, you can marry Dorothy when I am dead; she will marry you then. Oh, Philip! She is what I was ten years ago. Don't be afraid to love her — don't let her feel the growing indifference which ruined my life. Give her everything, everything; and, Philip, one thing I ask — never let her know I meant to kill myself — keep my memory unstained in her innocent eyes. This is my expiation. Is it great enough? — does it blot out all my sins? — Do you forgive me? Good-bye, Philip, good-bye, good-bye."

The pen dropped from her trembling fingers, and the Baroness's head fell forward on her folded arms. Her weakness overcame her, and she slipped from her knees to the floor, and lay there immovable and dumb. Time was unmarked to her. Moments or centuries might have passed over her unheeding head. She was living through the bitterest as well as the most beautiful part of her life. Like the visions which come to the drowning, all her life with Philip shifted like a panorama before her closed, aching eyes. She stood beside him, a girl again with her future before her, glowing with all the awakened enthusiasm of a repressed youth, — romantic, unworldly, beautiful, with her starved heart lavishing all the love born of twenty years of unsatisfied hunger upon him, her husband, the one man in all the world to her. She remembered the months of unutterable happiness with Philip, when he kept her to himself, apparently desiring no other sunshine than the light which fell from her eyes, and the first dreadful night when he had forgotten her in his absorption in his work, — the work she had begged so hard to be allowed to share, — and the hours had dragged by with interminable slowness. That day stood by itself like the heading of a chapter, and marked the beginning of

her unhappiness, as she looked back over the miserable years. She had never reproached him for his forgetfulness, and her keenest hurt had been that he did not realize that there was anything wrong. Then came the weeks when, with their house full of his friends and hers, the days and nights ringing with laughter and fun, her heart had craved the solitude of their early married days, — days when they had been sufficient to each other, and everything outside was weighed in the balance against their love. She felt he was drifting away from her down the sea of indifference which held so many of the shipwrecked marriages, and she saw herself trying to re-adjust her life to the new perspective, where love was slipping out of sight in the distance, and tolerance and callousness were the only ports in sight. Then came the days of wretchedness before she could bring herself to leave him forever, and the feverish, restless hours before she was really on the steamer after her decision had been made. Then, oh, those other suffering years after she married the Baron, when she had forced herself to learn to cover her broken heart with superficial signs of contentment, that she might appear to draw happiness from the gay European life into which her marriage with him had cast her. There

was little wonder that she had won the reputation of being clever and cynical, for her wretchedness had had no other outlet, and she fought with her tongue in order to shield her life from too close observation.

Oh, how weary she was of living her dual life! If she could only be honest to herself, and, dropping the semblance of happiness, revel in her misery till it had blotted out the wretched past! But even candor was denied her; she must act the lie to the bitter end. Surely Death would be kinder to her than Life had been.

The door opened, and Marie entered. With a heartbreaking cry she sprang to the side of her mistress and raised her in her arms. The Baroness opened her eyes and looked into the face above her for a dazed moment.

"Is it so bad as this?" Marie asked anxiously, and the Baroness's senses cleared.

"Yes, Marie, I have suffered — oh, agonies!" she answered, trying to rise. Marie helped her on to the bed, and then hastily dissolved one of the powders she had brought, and carried it to her.

"Drink this. It will help you. It is cruel for you to suffer like this."

The Baroness took the glass and drank the

contents without a word. For the first time in her life she was like a child in Marie's hands.

"Let me send Najib for Dr. Eisenbach, Baroness, and I will sleep here on the couch," Marie said with the tender familiarity of a devoted and trusted maid.

Renée smiled slightly; already she was getting command of herself.

"No, Marie, I sha'n't need the doctor. You are so good! This is all I need. Go to bed. I shall soon be better. Leave the powders, and I will take another if my head does not quiet soon."

"Dr. Eisenbach gave them to me very strong," Marie said, "and told me you must not repeat the dose more than once. I will fix a powder for you, and if you need it, you can take it."

"No, no, leave them all. Doubtless I shall not need any more, Marie. If I do, I will take one myself. Now go to bed. You are a good girl. I shall be all right in the morning." She sank back on the pillows. "All right in the morning."

Marie put the room in order, picking up the sheets of paper the Baroness had brushed off the desk when she fell to the floor.

"You have been writing," she said reproachfully, staring at the strange manuscript.

The Baroness looked at Marie with startled eyes. "It was nothing," she said. "I wrote to ease the pain. Put them back on the desk, I will take care of the papers."

"But I know it made you worse —"

"No, no, child," Renée answered hastily; "it made me better — better — I forgot my head. Now, go to bed," and Marie went out and closed the door.

The opiate was beginning to work, and the Baroness felt a delicious drowsiness creeping over her; but she fought it off, and sprung from the bed as soon as Marie was out of hearing. She mixed two more powders, and put the glass conspicuously on the table by her bed, leaving the tell-tale papers beside it.

"There shall be no doubt about my taking them," she said to herself; "suspicion must not fall on Marie."

Then she sat down again at the desk, and took up the closely-written sheets. She started to fold them, but the words before her seemed like living things, and her eyes fastened upon them with irresistible force. She read them slowly, blinded by tears of self-pity and by overpowering love as she thought of Philip.

It was a laborious task, and often the paper dropped from her hands as she struggled for control. When she finished, she rose and paced the floor her hands locked in front of her, her haunted eyes, senseless to their environment, piercing the space between them and in fancy watching Philip as he read.

"It is selfish!" she cried to herself; "selfish of me to send him this! I have no right to do it. He has suffered enough." Philip's face, merciless with its unspoken accusations, came up to her in a cruel flash of memory, and she pressed her palms hard over her eyes to shut out the sight.

"O God!" she moaned, "let me forget it. For once, just these few hours, let me see the love and not the hate. He would look with pity if he knew," she went on hysterically. "If he should get the letter, he would understand. He could not hate me when he knew." She took the letter in her hands, and held it lovingly, pressing it hard against her lips. "O God! I am growing weak. I must not yield. The letter would ruin his life — keep them apart. He will marry Dorothy, if he does not know." With sudden impulse, she tore it in two, and then, clutching the muti-

lated sheets fiercely in her hands, fell by the couch in wild lamentation. For a few moments her grieving controlled her, then with the quick variableness which marked her individuality, she rose, tearless, and crushing the paper roughly, lighted it hastily over the night-lamp and threw the burning pieces into the fireplace. Then a look of great resolve came over her face. She took up a locket she wore around her neck, and, opening it, kissed the miniature it held.

" It is for you, Philip," she said, almost with eagerness, looking at the face lovingly, dwelling with tender memories upon every beloved feature, while something within her stopped beating, and her trembling lips sought to still themselves upon the painted ivory. Then she looked carefully about the room to see if any disorder could betray premeditation in her death, and, seemingly satisfied, she crawled into bed.

She placed the locket about her neck, and drank the morphine she had prepared a while before.

" ' Only a sleep eternal in an eternal night,' " she quoted, and then, — " If there is a God — He will forgive," she said, as she dropped wearily into the pillows.

A great peace came over her. She lay with her eyes closed, her lips smiling. Once she tried to kiss the locket she held in her hand; but the lips were numb, and her hand fell back upon the bed.

CHAPTER XXIII

No past is dead for us, but only sleeping.
HELEN HUNT.

PHILIP MORRISON sat in his private office on Broadway, leaning over a littered desk, hastily reading a pile of type-written letters, and signing them one by one. The odor of spring, pregnant with the pledge of progeny, was in the air and floated through the open window. Through the door, which was ajar, came the click, click of many typewriters, and the dim undertone of conversations interrupted by the strident, imperative voices of the various business-callers. Philip's expression was irritable and worn, and he despatched the letters with nervous haste. The responsibilities of four years of steady labor were beginning to tell upon him, and he looked older by several years than when we last saw him. His hair was turning gray a little, back of the temples, and a few new lines were marked on his face. The sleepy, indolent personality had been lost in the nervous, energetic, rushing man of business, and yet there was no buoyancy or hope about

his appearance, but rather a suggestion of the morbid activity of a man who chooses work as the least of many evils.

The office-boy poked his head in through the unlatched door:

"Mr. Goldthwaite, sir," he said, and a middle-aged man entered.

Philip did not look up, but grunted forth an interrogative, "Well?"

"What about the Bernard edition, Mr. Morrison? I can't possibly get it done in time."

"Drop the Weymouth History and put the whole force on that edition," Philip answered, and the man turned to go. "Stop," he said. "When is that due?"

"The 15th of March," the man replied.

"Rush it through," Philip said, and the man went out.

"The 15th of March," Philip repeated, "the 15th of March."

The words had a strangely familiar sound, and Philip knotted his brows in the effort to remember something they suggested. His face was turned toward the stone buildings across the street, but he did not see them, for a mist gathering in his eyes hid them from his sight. Gradually a picture was forming itself in his

brain, and memory was painting in the details with pitiless accuracy, leaving no point untouched which could add to the poignancy of his grief. He was in Egypt again, and Dorothy stood beside him in the tower of the Gizereh Gardens. Her hand was upraised in mock solemnity, and she had just repeated the words he had given her:

"On the 15th of March, if I am able to travel, otherwise I will send a messenger," and Philip's head dropped on his hands. How useless these five years had been! Five years of bitter, determined labor to forget Dorothy, to barricade himself so firmly within a fortress of stoicism that even dreams of her could not enter, and four little words spoken by an alien had penetrated the impregnable, and knocked the structure about his feet! He had made a good fight, but he had started wrong. It was as Dorothy had said years ago, — there was no virtue in stoically bearing anything. He should have faced his misery like a man, and grown accustomed to it, and then a surprise like this would have been impossible.

"On the 15th of March, five years," — and this was the year, and Dorothy would go. But those words were spoken before she knew of his treachery; they would have no weight with

her now; he must forget them. A dreary, hopeless look settled upon his face, and he closed his eyes and set his teeth together.

"You are under oath." He started and looked up suddenly. Had some one spoken the words? No, he was alone, but two arms were about his neck, and two happy brown eyes were looking into his.

"We will keep it together," Dorothy had said. Oh, the misery of it all! Had he not suffered enough? He got up and paced the floor, trying to force his brain into its accustomed channels; but the memories were too strong, like infinitesimal fairies they thronged through the shattered door of his castle, jostling, tumbling over each other, filling the room with the smell of the orange blossoms, and the seductive calls of Egypt and Dorothy.

He sunk into a chair and leaning upon the desk buried his face in his arms. A wild idea forced itself upon him. What if he should keep the tryst? He sat long with his head hidden in his arms, hope and despair fighting together in his consciousness, and then he roused himself and went to his safe with halting eagerness, drawing from it a package which he held reverently and almost fearfully. He went back and locked the door, and then set-

tled himself at the desk, opening the package with trembling fingers.

A miniature of himself, a letter, and some charred pieces of manuscript written in the German text were all that it contained, and Philip opened the letter, which bore a date nearly five years back, and read:

DEAR MORRISON, — A doctor has no right to a meddling curiosity as regards the things he sees and hears in the rooms of sickness and death, but sometimes things are so brought before his eyes that he cannot ignore them and meddling seems necessary, and this is one of those times. When the Baroness's maid summoned me four weeks ago, after the death of her mistress, I found things which pointed to suicide, but I held my counsel, — the charred portions of a voluminous correspondence in the grate, the two papers beside the glass of morphine solution, and the enclosed miniature. To save her name from stigma of any kind, and to make the affair seem the result of aberration during intense pain, I removed the miniature from her tightly shut fingers, and took the papers which were not entirely destroyed from the fireplace. The face in the miniature, and the memory of a night-vigil suggested for whom the bits of paper were intended, and after due deliberation I determined to send them to you, in the hope that by so doing I might in some way be following the wishes of the one who wrote them.

There is a mystery here which is beyond me to solve, but which may be clear to you, and as I have said before, it is not my business to inquire into it too closely.

With the sincere hope that I am making no mistake in sending these to you,

I am,

Faithfully yours,

HENRICH EISENBACH.

Physician to the Khedive,
Cairo, Egypt.

Philip took up the miniature and looked at it long and regretfully. It was of himself in his early youth, done for Renée before they were married — when he loved her and they were happy together. The tender, boyish face looking at him from the ivory moved him strangely. There was no sin in those frank eyes. That was the man Renée loved — and she had loved him; he felt sure of it as he reviewed their meetings in Cairo under the vivifying light of the doctor's disclosures; but the certainty he felt in regard to this made the reason for her leaving him more than ever unexplainable.

He took up the charred pieces of paper and looked them over. There was only one of any size; the others contained only detached words,

but this one was part of a sheet burned so that half of each line was destroyed; however, the words which were left were clear and suggestive, and Philip could gather from the tear-stained, trembling handwriting something of the despair and contrition of the woman who penned it.

"afraid to love
growing indifference which
everything, everything; and, Philip,
never let her know I meant to kill
memory unstained in her innocent
expiation. Is it great enough?
my sins? — Do you forgive
good-bye, good-bye.

His name in the letter precluded any possibility of the letter being written to another, and even had that been absent Philip would never for a moment have doubted that it was meant for him. It was as if the doctor's letter had removed a mental cataract from the eyes of his brain, and made him see outlines, though dim and mysterious, where before the blackness had been impenetrable. They were only suggestions of things which he could see now, but they made further enlightenment possible, whereas before he could only grope blindly with no hope of ultimate success. Of some

things he was sure. Renée had loved him, left him, died for him. Those three things were not to be disputed. The rest was hidden in mystery. There had been a terrible misunderstanding, and only eternity could set it right. Then came the old battle again. Renée had taken her life as an expiation for her sin that Philip might marry Dorothy and be happy; but could she not see that there could be no happiness for them after such a sacrifice? Dorothy would hate him if she knew, and even Philip had recoiled from the thought of happiness bought at such a price. No, years ago he had renounced all hope of a life with Dorothy, and Fate had no right to bring the temptation up to him again.

His head dropped again upon his folded arms, and the burning tears forced themselves between his shut lids. Then came the old cry, What was the meaning of it all? He had been moved about like a puppet on a miniature stage all his life, for what purpose? To what end? He had not even learned the lesson of resignation. He still fought against the pitiless rulings of Fate. People came and went from his locked door, and still he sat there, crushed, defeated; for the first time in his bitter life, his spirit was broken.

The God of Things

A wave of music broke through the stillness of the night, — a song which was on the lips of almost every one at the time, a pathetic bit of melody, sung by a rough set of men returning from the theatre, but it came to the man sitting alone in the arraigning darkness like a voice from the vibrant past, pulsating with love and hope.

"Oh, promise me that some day you and I
Will take our love together to some sky
Where we can be alone and faith renew —
. . . . . .
Of love unspeakable that is to be,
Oh, promise me, oh, promise me."

It is often the little things which sway us in the crises of our lives, and the song brought Philip back to life and courage again.

He would go to Egypt, keep their tryst, and if Dorothy had not forgotten, — if the God of Things should send her there to meet him, — he would take it as an omen that their warfare was at an end, and that the decree had gone forth that he should know something of happiness and peace. There was just time to reach Cairo before the 15th of March, if he left at once. It might prove a profitless journey, but it must be made; his sanity depended

upon it, for he felt he should go mad if he stayed in America through the next two weeks, and he began straightening out his papers and arranging his affairs for a journey.

A day before he would have said it was impossible for him to leave his work; to-night every barrier disappeared before the compelling desire which had taken possession of him, — Egypt and Dorothy — not even Fate should thwart him in this.

CHAPTER XXIV

ALL that last night I watched with sleepless eyes;
Great stars arose and crept across the skies.
The world was all too still for mortal rest,
For pitiless thoughts were peering in the breast.
The night was long, so long, it seemed at last
I had grown old and a long life passed.

EDWARD MARKHAM.

PHILIP stood on the deck of the P. & O., watching with interest the approach of the steamer to Port Saîd. His eyes had been upon the low line of land where Egypt lay for many hours without noticing any apparent variation in its contour; but now they were at last near enough for him to see the monotonous line of dull brown buildings and the stirring, turbaned men and yashmâked women.

He had had a long, tedious trip from New York, having been so absorbed in his own mission that he had isolated himself, meeting nobody, and now he looked at the land of his Mecca with mingled feelings of welcome and dread. When he had actually set forth from New York on the great North German steamer,

a strange, unexplainable buoyancy had taken possession of him. He was going to meet Dorothy, and the desire he felt had so governed him that, through the long, restless nights and weary days, he grew to believe in it as a certainty, and the possibility of her not meeting him had rarely come up to him to trouble his anticipations; but now a vague uneasiness enveloped him. What would be the end of it all if Dorothy failed to appear? Could he again bear the disappointment? He had been a fool to count upon it; for it was very likely, in fact quite probable, that she had forgotten, — no, not forgotten, Dorothy would not forget. Her absence would only mean one thing, — the intention to do away with anything which touched the past, their past and, O God! their future.

They had reached Port Saîd, and were putting out the gang-plank, and people were going ashore. There would be several hours to stay here, as the "Bengal" must take on coal for her trip through the Red Sea, so he went ashore with the rest. He waved off the pestering donkey boys who surrounded him, and walked quickly through the crowd of fluctuating sight-seers and intrusive natives into the hot, dirty streets where the pungent, ubiqui-

tous odor of garlic greeted him with unmistakable flavor. The odor was Egypt, however, and Philip drew in deep breaths of it as if it were as sweet as that of the orange blossoms, for the one is as inseparably connected with Egypt as the other. Back and forth he wandered through the town, speaking little, heeding little, intent on his own meditations, and then he returned to the boat to spend a sleepless night on deck, watching in the moonlight the monotonous landscape on the shores of the Suez, as they floated through the canal to Ismaîlîya, where they anchored until morning.

At six o'clock all the Egyptian passengers left the ship, which proceeded on its way to India, and Philip spent another dreary wait at Ismaîlîya, walking the acacia-shaded streets in gloomy aloofness until the train arrived which was to take him to Cairo. He had already made up his mind that he would not seek Dorothy out. He would go to one of the new hotels which had been built since his return to America, and stay there until the 15th, when he would keep their tryst and wait under the shadow of the Sphinx for the consummation of his desires, or — God forbid — the annihilation of all his hopes.

Philip watched the Pyramids from the car-

window as the train steamed through the familiar country, and all the incidents of five years before drifted through his mind, from the time he had first met Dorothy, on through the different stages of their friendship, through their confessions of love and their final parting. It was strange that there was no thought of the Baroness at this time. Philip seemed to have forgotten the reason of his parting with Dorothy in the intensity of the fact, and now, amid all the mournful musings of his brain, the thought that he was soon to see her again was uppermost. His misgivings had disappeared with the melancholy night, and he began to count upon their reunion as an established fact, and as he neared Cairo a fever of expectation took possession of him, while he tried to conjure up the manner of their meeting. Would he meet her at Shepheard's, if he went to that hotel; would she come to him across the porch in the sunshine, as she had come in the days gone by; would he meet her on the street, and surprise a look of love and welcome in her dear face; would he hear her voice and, turning, find her standing at his side; or would the oath be carried out in very truth, and their meeting be beneath the shadow of the Sphinx? There were yet two days before the hour of the

tryst, and he would not force their meeting, let it come as it might. For the present, it was enough that they were in the same land, breathing the same air, and lifting hopeful eyes to the same stars.

The sun was setting as the train puffed into the station, and Philip took a carriage at once to the Grand Hotel in the Gizereh Gardens. Oh, it was all so familiar; the place had changed so little in the five years! Every landmark he passed was reminiscent of Dorothy. It was as if the very stones of the streets were crying out her name.

But the hotel was new. He seemed to get a firmer grip upon himself in the unfamiliar corridors; and the scene was so cosmopolitan that he had no sensation of being in Cairo. Late in the evening he drove to Shepheard's. Although he had planned not to attempt to see Dorothy, he grew so nervous and impatient that he could not refrain from going to look over the register for her name and her father's. He paused with his hands on the book, as if wanting to grasp to the full the joy he would feel when he saw her signature, and then he opened it, turning the pages carefully and reading the names slowly, lest he should pass hers in the maze of names before him. But her name did

not appear. He stood a stupid moment, staring at the last entry, and then he walked quietly out into the night. It had not occurred to him that she would go to any other hotel, for the same desire which would bring her back to Cairo, would send her to the place which was so full of memories — unless — why had he not thought of it before? — she had felt the same desire as he, that their first meeting should be in the presence of the Sphinx, — that great symbol of constancy and unchangeableness. Of course this accounted for the non-appearance of her name on the register, and Philip's mercurial temperament received an impetus which sent him with one bound to the seventh heaven of bliss. He spent the night between short intervals of sleep in these trying moods. Sometimes he would be writhing under the scourges of doubt and misery, only to rise triumphant into the region of hope and cheerfulness under the stimulus of a fleeting thought; and, with it all, came the trying nervousness and insomnia which were telling upon him both mentally and physically. He could eat little, and in the two days which intervened before his tryst at the Sphinx he had worn himself into a mental state well-nigh bordering upon insanity. But the day came

at last, — the great day of days to him, — and Philip rose and dressed as a king for his coronation, for was not Dorothy going to crown him with the diadem of her love and life?

The morning hours dragged themselves away with well-nigh unbearable slowness, and Philip shifted from one thing to another in the effort to control his shattered nerves. It was useless; he would drive to the Pyramids and, under the spell of their great silence, perhaps find the calmness he had lost since he first entered the land of the Pharaohs.

Upon the hill in front of the Sphinx, Philip sat and waited. Parties of exploring tourists came and went, inquisitively staring at the man sitting in the sand with bent head and folded arms. At first he had searched the groups of sight-seers with nervous intentness for the figure he had known so well and come to meet; but as the hands of his watch crept up to the trysting hour, passed, and sped on, an apathy settled upon him, and he bent lower and lower into the sand, until his face was hidden in his folded arms.

In the west the sun fell below the long line of golden sand, sending a parting shaft of gold over the gleaming desert toward the silhouetted minarets, and touching in its flight the silent

figure, but the man did not move. And when the silver stars peeped through the dense black curtain, and the moon rose over the sleeping city, they found the same silent figure sitting in the sand with his head bent upon his knees.

He was roused by a slight kick, and a voice speaking a language he could not understand, and he opened his eyes to look into the friendly face of an Arab bending above him. Behind the Arab was a camel standing serene and docile in the moonlight, and Philip's eyes fastened upon it. About him lay the desert, cold and silvery under the rays of the moon, and beyond, away off as far as his eyes could see — what?

A great desire rose in his breast. He stood on his feet and plunged his hand into his pockets, drawing out a handful of silver.

"How much?" he asked.

The bargaining spirit awoke in the Arab. "How far?" he asked in turn.

"Never mind," Philip said. "To keep — sell."

The boy stood amazed and incredulous. Philip took out a roll of bills and all the silver he had, and motioning for the boy to hold his tunic up, he poured it all into it. "Yours,"

he said, pointing to the money; "mine," to the camel. The boy nodded assent and gathering up the money hastily, hid it in his tunic.

The camel knelt, and Philip mounted him; then, with a harsh cry, the camel rose to his feet, and Philip took the halter and stick the Arab handed him, and looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, and speaking no word, Philip turned the camel's head toward the boundless desert, and slowly rode away through the silent moonlight.

The Arab stood speechless, watching him until he was swallowed up in the distance; then he thrust his hand into his tunic, and drew from it a letter, which he fingered a few moments abstractedly, looking from it to the desert where the man had gone. Then he felt of the money hidden in his blouse, and muttering something to himself, tore the letter into tiny pieces, and digging a hole in the sand, he buried them deep out of sight and started toward the Mena House.

CHAPTER XXV

OH ! come to me, come, oh, my love, in the morrow that waits for us both,
And the Future will pardon the Past for the seeming collapse of an oath,
And the hope that is centred in thee, when the right to invest it is won,
Will illumine and gladden the world with a glory surpassing the sun.

ERIC MACKAY.

AT Beni Suêf the dahabeah "Horus" lay hopelessly stuck in the mud. The captain, dragoman, and various assistants had in turn, and simultaneously, ordered the sullen Arabs to work. Ropes had been fastened to the dahabeah, and dragged by men on shore, poles had been used from the sides of the boat, in the hope of getting her adrift; all to no purpose, there she stuck fast with apparently no intention of moving.

On the upper deck, under the spread awning, two people watched the proceedings with interest, and one with more or less anxiety. A man lay reclining in a steamer-chair, a light rug thrown across his knees, although it was mid-

day, and his eyes shaded by a canvas hat, while by his side stood a girl in the perfection of her beauty. Dorothy Dike had changed little in these last five years, save for a mellowing of her earlier charms, and a deeper look of earnestness which settled into sadness when her face was in repose. She stood quietly watching the men in their futile attempts to free the dahabeah, her hands resting upon the back of her father's chair, and a thoughtful, perplexed look in her eyes. Her strong, womanly figure, full of life and vigor, stood out in bold relief amid her surroundings. Dressed in a short skirt and the conventional shirt-waist, her head free of any covering save her masses of bronze hair, her face tanned and burned by the tropical sun, she might have posed as a nineteenth-century Cleopatra awaiting her Mark Antony.

"What shall we do, Dorothy, if they can't get us off?" Mr. Dike asked finally. "Each day lessens our chances, for the Nile is constantly growing lower."

"We 'll hang out a distress signal, papa dear, and put ourselves on board Cook's steamer, and haste for Cairo," Dorothy laughed.

"But what an ending for our trip!" Mr. Dike answered. "I should n't mind if we stayed here for a while, Dorothy. I am loath

to give up the trip, it has been such a satisfactory one, and we can rest here a few days any way, and see if there is no chance of moving on."

Dorothy's eyes opened wider, and a pathetic little droop settled in the corners of her mouth. A few days! And this was the 13th of March, and she had promised to be at Gizeh on the 15th, scarcely time if they were free to drift at once, and there was little chance of getting off for several hours at the earliest. She had induced her father, indeed it needed no great urging, to return to Egypt this winter, leaving Bobbie at Groton, where he had been already a year, and take the long-desired trip up the Nile, with the sole idea of being in Cairo on the 15th of March, thus keeping the oath made five years ago. She did not confess to herself that she expected to find Philip there, and yet if he should come, he should not find her absent. Of the Baroness, Dorothy dared not think. A haunting suspicion and fear had followed her all these years, in spite of the doctor's assurance that her death was due to a weak heart, that she might have sacrificed her life for their happiness, and the thought had stood an insuperable barrier to their union. Philip would know,— he would tell her, — and

if this was so, they would be more hopelessly apart than they were five years ago. She had beaten this thought down in her heart, forcing herself to disregard it, determining upon one more meeting with Philip, right or wrong, and then — into the future she dared not look; and she was going to be balked within a hundred miles of the trysting place.

Through the long afternoon Dorothy sat, outwardly calm, but with a tumult raging within her breast. Her father was quick to notice her moods, and she was determined he should not discover any symptoms of the anxiety which filled her heart; so she read, and chatted with him until bedtime came, and she had bade him good-night at his door; then she went to her own state-room, and throwing open the window, faced the shore and thought.

On the bank the night-watch were huddled together in a picturesque circle, sitting on their heels, as is the nature of the Egyptians, their heads swathed in rolls of white cloth, their feet bare, and only their black faces, and occasionally a gesticulating hand, testifying to the fact that they were living things instead of bundles of rags. A bright fire burned in the centre of the circle, casting a flickering light on their faces and white turbans and gowns, and

throwing the outer world into a dense darkness by contrast, which shut them in a little isolated group bounded by the Egyptian night.

"If I am able to travel, otherwise I will send a messenger," the oath had stated, and Dorothy's mind fixed upon the words, "send a messenger;" but how? She could not go, that was impossible. It meant confession to her father, and his suffering, as well as hers, if Philip did not appear. No, confession brought with it too great a risk; a messenger must be found; and in the watches of the night Dorothy planned her moves.

In the early morning, while her father was yet asleep, she dressed, took up a letter which she had written the night before, and hiding it in her waist she went through the dining-room to the deck. Selecting her little guide from the group of Arabs who sat up, sleepily rubbing their eyes, at her approach, she went ashore, and started for the town. She soon explained to Ahmid what she wanted to do, — to find a man with a camel, for only with a camel would a messenger be able to make the required trip, and together they searched the place. It was not difficult to locate the one camel in the village, and soon Ahmid had routed the man out and was explaining to him, in behalf of Dor-

othy, the purport of their early visit. At first he refused utterly to make the attempt in the day and a half; but after he had scrutinized the money Dorothy gave him, he guaranteed to follow her instructions to the letter, and straightway, upon receiving the missive from her hands and the commission to deliver it to none other than Mr. Morrison, he calmly watched them out of sight, and waking a fellow Arab, despatched him upon the errand, paying him about a third of the amount he had received from her. Thus Dorothy's letter, which started on its way to Philip, was destined never to reach him, for it was destroyed almost within his sight, and hidden in the silent sands where lie, perhaps, *qui sait*, many like secrets which have caused the breaking of loving hearts or the sacrifice of loyal lives.

The 15th came and went, and Dorothy sat through the longed-for afternoon reading to her father, and keeping up the semblance of cheerfulness before him, only to drop into woeful meditation when left to herself, while her wistful eyes rested upon the landscape toward the Pyramids of Gizeh till the tears, rising unheeded and unchecked, shut it from her sight. And still the dahabeah lay at Beni Suêf, sinking deeper and deeper in the mud, and

the dragoman had taken the post-steamer for Cairo to summon help from one of the tugs. He would be back the next day, and then there was a chance of their starting on the 17th for Cairo. The 17th — two days too late — for if Philip had gone to the Sphinx and waited for her, and the messenger had missed him, Dorothy felt sure he would leave Egypt at once. There were many little things her hands found to do to add to her father's comfort; but she went about like one in a dream, while her heart beat heavy and dull in her breast. For five years she had dreamed of this meeting, marking off each day from the calendar as bringing her one day nearer Philip, and the day had come and gone — yes, for the golden sun was sinking behind the grove of palm-trees, lower and lower every moment — and they were still apart. She crept to her state-room, stricken and dumb, after leaving her father, and threw herself on her bed with wide-open, dry eyes to count the dreary hours till another day.

The dragoman arrived with the tug the next afternoon, too late to begin work however, but it was good to see the smoke from the dirty funnel, and feel that another day would find them floating down toward Cairo.

The God of Things

Dorothy and her father had just finished dinner, and come upon deck to enjoy the long, peaceful twilight after the hot, uneventful day. The air was warm and soft and still, and in the sky remained only the memory of a gorgeous sunset, while the long shadows of the palms and high banks were falling across the silent river. The Arabs gathered in a circle on the lower deck, and began singing their weird, wailing music so softly that even on the upper deck, where Mr. Dike and Dorothy sat, it floated like the fragment of a melody coming from a distance.

Dorothy's eyes were taking in the beauty of the scene, listlessly noting each irregular palm-tree outlined against the peaceful sky with its correspondingly long, straggling shadow across the water, the moving lights and figures in the little village, and the dark, oriental faces of the Arabs squatting on the deck below, when her apathy was broken in upon by the approach of a group of Arabs, seemingly from the village, who were excitedly gesticulating and talking to each other, while they were coming nearer and nearer the dahabeah. The appearance of the fellaheen attracted the attention of Mohammed and the captain; for though silent, inquisitive groups of natives watching upon the

shore were commonplace occurrences, the evident excitement under which these men were laboring marked them at once with unusual significance. The dragoman met them as they approached the plank, and stepping on the shore, he stood listening to them, putting in a question now and then, while the other Arabs on the boat slowly circled about them until they were the centre of an attentive, silent group of listeners. Dorothy walked to the side of the boat, and peered through the gloom where the crowd stood. They were talking in Arabic, and she could not get the gist of what they said; but Mohammed's interest and attention showed that this was no ordinary tale the Arabs brought, for he was very peremptory with his rule that no loafers should hover about the dahabeah, and would have summarily despatched them had their news been commonplace.

Dorothy waited in silence a few moments watching the excited group, and then she spoke:

"What is it, Mohammed?"

The dragoman came as near to the boat as he could, and explained:

"I can't tell all they mean, Mees Dike, but they say a fellah from the village ride to Cairo

on his camel some many days ago, and to-night came back the camel with a man who is sick, or," Mohammed gave a comprehensive shrug, "drunk; he look like your people, and they come to see what they do about him. The man much sick, and not know to talk, but only cry to himself, and they come here. You wait, and I go and find it out."

A great fear trembled in Dorothy's breast:

"Wait, Mohammed," she said, "and I will go with you," and hastily explaining to her father that a traveller was in trouble, she ran across the plank to Mohammed, and joining the little band of Arabs, they hurried toward the city, now hidden in the night.

She found him where they had placed him when they lifted him from the camel's back, beside one of the little adobe huts in the dirt of the roadside, but with a bit of straw for his head, which some woman, with an instinct of motherly pity, had placed there, and she fell upon her knees beside his lifeless figure and buried her hand in his breast. The heart still beat, and the practical side of Dorothy arose to the emergency. Sending Mohammed back to the dahabeah to take off a door from one of the cabins, she converted it into an improvised stretcher, and he was placed upon it and borne

back to the dahabeah, followed by the little cortége of silent, wondering Arabs.

In the cabin Philip was laid upon the bed and stimulants were administered, in the effort to bring him back from the land he had so nearly reached, and the tug was sent speeding on its way down the shallow river to bring Dr. Eisenbach as soon as possible.

. . . . . .

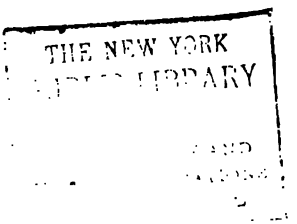
Like a great bird with wings outspread, the "Horus" drifted down the Nile toward Cairo, a veritable garden of tropical plants afloat, gay with flags and bright pillows, for this was a gala day, — Philip's first day upon deck. Dr. Eisenbach had started him in the right direction, and peace, nourishing food, and Dorothy had done the rest. Now he reclined on a steamer-chair under the shade of the stretched awning, looking a little pale and worn, but for the first time like the Philip Dorothy had known, and the sight threatened to destroy her self-possession, so she turned her chair a bit away from him, and busied her hands with some inconsequential work.

There had been no word of greeting between them; at first because Philip was too ill even to wonder how he happened to be on the dahabeah, and afterward because, with his return-

ing strength, Dorothy seemed to float away from him into a little harbor of reserve where Philip dared not enter.

To-day they were alone on deck, shut off by the screen of palms and flags from the captain and mate, who stood far back at the helm, and a silence fraught with significance settled between them, — a tremulous silence which both felt vibrating through their inmost souls and which neither willed to break. Philip's eyes were so ardent and intense that although Dorothy did not face them, she could feel their steady gaze, as they rested upon her averted face, and the soft color rose slowly above her neck until it dyed her face a delicate pink. Philip lay pitilessly watching her, drinking in the beauty of the face he had done without so long, noting the waves of golden-bronze hair which were caught in a loose knot at the top of her well-shaped head, and fluffed like a halo over the low forehead and shell-like ear, and he drew in a deep breath, holding it between his teeth. It broke in a quivering sigh, — "Dorothy!" And still she sat silent, her fingers stumbling over the embroidery she held in her hands.

"What does it mean, Dorothy? What does it mean?" he said softly, with shaking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lips. "A few days ago I was starving for a glimpse of you, for the sound of your voice, the touch of your hand, and here you sit where I can feast my eyes upon your face, — the face I have tried to forget, and yet have never lost sight of during these five years, — within reach of my hand, when I had despaired of ever finding you again."

She did not answer, but the trembling fingers which had struggled with the embroidery dropped into her lap and lay still.

"All my life I have been the plaything of the God of *Things*, flung about like an atom of sand in a Khamsin storm, buffeted, thwarted, defeated at every turn, but never broken in spirit, until, for the second time, I lost you. Then my courage forsook me, and I prayed that the worst might come, — death — anything — so long as it should be the end," Philip's voice dropped, and the last words came to Dorothy on the wings of a fluttering breath. "Then only He took pity on me, and brought me to my heart's desire, — you, Dorothy — you — "

He lifted himself on his elbow, and reached a trembling hand across the space which separated them, and touched her fingers:

"You hold my life in the hollow of your

hand, Dorothy, — what are you going to do with it — "

Then, for the first time, she turned her luminous eyes upon him:

" Have I any right to choose, Philip? "

The words were scarcely above a whisper, but they held an intensity in their meaning which penetrated his passion, and woke the sleeping memories in his brain.

The Baroness — his wife — Dorothy knew nothing, and for the fraction of a second an explanation hung in the balance, but the Baroness's letter, with its piteous prayer, tipped the scales; Renée's secret should be kept, Dorothy should never know.

Philip spoke softly, sadly, though his eyes rested on Dorothy with a look which thrilled her:

" Renée is dead, Dorothy, — God is her judge — not we — nor have we any right to cast suspicion upon the manner of her death; she has been dead more than four years, Dorothy, and there is nothing save my unworthiness to keep us apart."

Then Dorothy leaned toward him with all the pent-up emotion of five years finding expression in her shining eyes, her trembling lips, and outstretched hands:

"Your unworthiness! Oh, Philip!" And then, under the power of her love, her speech failed her, and dropping her head, she pressed her lips upon the hands she held in hers.

"Not there! Not there!" Philip cried huskily; and, rising to his full height, strong in the might of his passion, he gathered her in his arms and, kissing her again and again, murmured thickly and brokenly, "Here, Dorothy! Here, here, here!"

And the dahabeah floated lazily down the sluggish river, between the high mud-banks, where the men stood in the hot sun, working their shadoofs incessantly in vain attempts to satisfy the thirsty land, past the little mud villages, snuggled close to the shore, silent and peaceful under the rustling palms, on and on through the blazing midday sun and fragrant, slumbrous twilight, until the swift passing hours brought Cairo into view, and the dahabeah, like a weary bird, drifted into her nest by the river's side. The journey was over and done, and from the top of the countless minarets, like a mammoth heart-beat pulsating through the city, came the weird, beautiful muezzin call, throbbing through the heavy, purple twilight, falling like a parting

benediction upon the trio who sat silent with bent heads:

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